

K. Barclay (G.)

AT THE
P H O E N I X;
OR, THE
H I S T O R Y
OF
POLYARCHUS AND ARGENIS.

Translated from the LATIN,

By a L A D Y.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOLUME I.

L O N D O N,

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M D C C L X X I I.



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TO HER MAJESTY,
C H A R L O T T E,
QUEEN OF GREAT BRITAIN,
THE PATRONESS OF
VIRTUES, ARTS, AND SCIENCES;
EQUALLY HONOURED AND BELOVED
BY ALL PARTIES, RANKS, AND DEGREES,
WITHIN THESE KINGDOMS,
THIS BOOK,
WHICH HAS OFTEN BEEN PRESENTED
TO PRINCES,
IS WITH PROFOUND RESPECT
MOST HUMBLY DEDICATED,
BY HER MAJESTY'S
MOST DUTIFUL SUBJECT
AND SERVANT,
THE EDITOR.

TO HER ALTESS
THE PRINCESS
OF WALES
BY
THE AUTHOR OF
"THE PRINCESS"

THE PRINCESS
BY
ALICE B. GELFING
IN TWO VOLUMES
VOL. I.
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P R E F A C E.

UNDER the appearance of a novel, a Book of real intrinsic value is here offered to the public. It is published in this manner, partly in compliance with the taste of the times, and partly for reasons of a more private nature, respecting the editor. It has been thought, something like an apology is necessary for prefixing a new name to a book, that is indeed only a translation of BARCLAY'S ARGENTIS : a work of singular merit, style, and character. It is a romance, an allegory, and a system of politics. In it the various forms of government are investigated, the causes of faction detected, and the remedies pointed out for most of the evils that can arise in a state.

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This book has been highly celebrated in former times, and is thought by many persons of indisputable judgement to deserve a revival, as well as any of the works of genius that are held in the highest estimation. It has been translated into most of the living languages, and twice into our own; the first time by Sir Robert le Grys, at the command of king Charles the First; the poetical part by Thomas May, Esq. a poet of some note in those days, as appears by his being competitor with Sir William Davenant for the place of poet laureat after the death of Ben Johnson, though the superior interest of the latter prevailed. The second translation was by Kingsmill Long, Esq. in 1636. It might seem at first view, that Mr. Long was ignorant of any other translation; but, upon farther examination, it appears, that he was extremely well acquainted with the former, which he sometimes follows closely in the prose, and has actually taken May's version of the poetry verbatim. Both these translations
are

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are now grown obsolete, but in the editor's opinion, the first is still greatly preferable. There is in the style a simplicity that is pleasing, and even respectable; while in the latter, there is a kind of affectation, that in some places rises to bombast, and in others descends to vulgarity. However, there is one remarkable circumstance in Mr. Long's translation: he has divided the work into chapters; but the author himself divided it into books; and in this, the present editor has thought proper to follow him.

Both these translations are but little known to the present generation, though the original is to be found in most of the libraries of the learned and curious. The editor has made use of both the former translations occasionally, and whenever a doubt arose, had recourse to the original. She has endeavoured to reform the language, without destroying the simplicity of the style, and has aimed at a language suitable to the subject, believing that a medium between the former antiquated

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one, and the present fashionable one, would best answer that purpose. She thought her favourite hero, Poliarchus, would appear to greater advantage in the majestic simplicity of a plain habit, than in the affected garniture of a modern Beau; or, in other words, she is of opinion that our language has not gained any advantages by the innovations that have been made in it within the last twenty years; that it has lost more in strength and conciseness, than it has gained in sweetness and elegance. For the first, she appeals to the writings of our best divines and moral philosophers; for the last, to the most eminent poets, in whose writings the standard of language is most certainly to be found. Barclay is rather prolix in his manner; therefore, instead of practising the modern art of wire-drawing, the chief labour of the editor has been to contract this work into as small a compass as was possible, without injuring the sense of the author. The former translators have followed the literal sense very close, and sometimes

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sometimes too much so. In their days they had no notion of giving the sense, rather than the words of an author; for which reason their translations are mostly very flat, the spirit generally evaporating by the way, and leaving only a *caput mortuum*, as Sir John Denham has very happily expressed it. In the poetical part of *Argenis* by Mr. May, it is translated line by line throughout, which puts such fetters upon the writer, that it is impossible he should ever express himself with ease, freedom, or the true spirit of poetry. But as the old translators followed the author too closely, so the modern ones have frequently taken as great liberties: they have taken the *ad libitum* in too large a sense, and used it too freely. The editor has aimed at the medium in this respect, as well as in those before mentioned; how far she has succeeded, is left to the judicious reader to determine, whose candour is hoped for in this and other points.

But it is likely, that the reader may desire to have some account of the author of this work, as well as of the translators.

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John Barclay was a gentleman of Scotch parentage, but of French birth and education; he was born January 28, 1582, and died August 12, 1621. His merits are celebrated by most of his cotemporaries; but there needs no other evidence of them than this work: the man, capable of writing *Argenis*, must have been eminent for wisdom and virtue. We may also discover, that he was ignorant of no kind of learning or accomplishments; he was also the author of another work of the satirical kind, called *Euphormio*. Barclay wrote his *Argenis* in Latin, on which the following distich was composed by Grotius:

Gente Caledonius Gallus natalibus hic est,
Romam Romani qui docet ore loqui.

Which may be thus paraphrased:

Barclay, from Caledonia sprung,
France claims thy labours and thy birth,
Thou cou'dst teach Rome her native tongue,
And the whole world proclaims thy worth.

For the plan and intention of this work, the reader is referred to Chap. XIV. of the second book, where the author, under
the

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the character of Nicopompus, explains his design, in a manner far more satisfactory than any thing that can be said by a translator, or an editor. But notwithstanding every translation, and every edition of the original, have something prefixed to them, called a *clavis* or key, to unlock the author's intention. That Barclay intended, under feigned names, to draw the real characters of many great persons of his time, is indisputable; but as commentators generally go far beyond their author's meaning, so these explainers of Argenis have laboured to find out persons to suit every character in the book, and thus would reduce it to a mere allegory: whereas the author himself, in the chapter referred to, declares those persons to be equally wrong, who should apply *all* the persons and facts to real history, with those who should apply *none*. However, as there are some characters universally allowed to be designed for particular persons, it is necessary to point out the most striking resemblances, and such as relate to the

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principal personages, countries, and events. For the rest, if every individual mentioned in the work had allusion to some person at that time living, it would not at this day be likely to engage the attention of the English reader, and the scholar may always recur to the original.

By the kingdom of Sicily, France is described, during the time of the civil wars under Henry the Third, and until the fixing the crown upon the head of Henry the Fourth. By the country over-against Sicily, and frequently her competitor, England is signified. By the country, formerly united under one head, but now divided into several principalities, the author means Germany, *i. e.* MERGANIA. Several names are disguised in the same manner, by transposing the letters.

In the next place come the principal persons designed. By Aquilius is meant the emperor of Germany, Calvin is USINULCA, and the Hugonots are called Hyperephanii. Under the person and character of Poliarchus, Barclay undoubtedly

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edly intended to describe that real hero, Henry of Navarre, as he has preserved the likeness even to his features and complexion. By his rivals are meant the leaders of the different factions; by Lycogenes and his friends, the Lorrain party, with the duke of Guise at their head. Some features of Hyaniſbé's character are supposed to resemble queen Elizabeth of England; Radirobanes is the king of Spain, and his fruitless expedition against Mauritania is pointed at the ambitious designs of Philip the Second, and his invincible armada. Under Meleander, the character of Henry the Third of France seems intended; though the resemblance is very flattering to him. The key-makers could never find out exactly, whom the author designed by Archombrotus; but some of them, thinking it necessary to guess, very wisely supposed, that Henry of Navarre was meant by him, as well as Poliarchus; which absurdity is alone sufficient to make one tired of such expositors, since rather than any thing

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thing should escape their sagacity, they would make a man his own rival, and contend with himself for a kingdom. By Britomandes and Timandra, the parents of Henry of Navarre are supposed to be pointed out ; and by Aneræstus, pope Clement the Eighth. There are some other plausible guesses, for which I refer the reader, whose curiosity wants to be farther gratified, to the Latin clavis. At the same time he will observe, that some characters might be absolutely necessary to the forming this story into a Romance, even though they had no existence in history, and consequently all attempts to decypher such, must be equally fruitless and perplexing. The story is of itself sufficiently interesting, the conduct amazingly artful, the lessons it contains equally applicable to all times, and all people, and perhaps never more so than at this moment, and in this country. Since England is become a nation of politicians, and men of all ranks and degrees believe themselves capable of investigating

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investigating the art of government, and since women have written with success upon the subject, the editor has thought herself at liberty to aim a blow at popular error, from behind Barclay, like Teucer from behind the shield of Ajax.

'Tis not the wholesome sharp morality,
Or modest anger of a satiric spirit,
That hurts or wounds the body of a state;
But the sinister application
Of the malicious, ignorant, and base
Interpreter, who will distort and strain
The general scope and purpose of an author,
To his particular and private spleen..

Ben Johnson.

To conclude: BARCLAY'S ARGENTIS affords such variety of entertainment, that every kind of reader may find in it something suitable to his own taste and disposition: the statesman, the philosopher, the foldier, the lover, the citizen, the friend of mankind, each may gratify his favourite propensity; while the reader, who comes for amusement only, will not go away disappointed.

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OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

BOOK THE FIRST.

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THE

PHOENIX;

OR, THE

HISTORY

OF

POLYARCHUS AND ARGENIS.

BOOK I. CHAP. I.

A stranger arriving in Sicily, a lady requests him to succour Poliarchus, who was attacked by five men, whom he afterwards vanquished.

THE world had not yet worshipped the Roman eagle, nor the ocean paid tribute to Tiber, when upon the coast of Sicily, where the river Gelas discharges

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itself

itself into the ocean, a young man of excellent beauty and deportment was landed from a foreign vessel. His servants, assisted by the mariners, brought his arms and baggage on shore; while he himself, fatigued with the motion of the ship, lay down among the baggage, and sought refreshment in the arms of sleep; but he was soon disturbed by a shrill clamour, which filled his mind with unquiet thoughts; and, as the noise drew nearer, it awakened him. Within sight was a wood of large and wide-spreading trees, though thinly scattered; but under their shade grew thick shrubs and bushes, whose darkness seemed a fit harbour for treacherous designs: but, on a sudden rushed out a woman of goodly countenance, had it not been distorted by grief, and disguised with tears. Her hair was dishevelled as at a funeral, and she continued shrieking like a furious Bacchanal. Her horse, though urged to speed by the whip, did not keep time with her impatience. The young stranger was moved; the

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the respect he bore to her sex, the bitterness of her grief, and, besides, the natural humanity of his heart, ever inclined to relieve the distressed, prompted him to assist her. Moreover, he thought it ominous, that this should be his first adventure in Sicily, and doubted what it might presage. As soon as she came within hearing, she thus addressed him: "Whoever thou art, if thou art a friend to virtue, oh lend thy aid to Sicily! which now suffers in the person of a most valiant and excellent man, who is basely attacked by thieves. The urgency of the case will not suffer me to make long intreaties for Poliarchus: even now he is unexpectedly beset by a furious band of robbers. In the tumult, I have escaped, and have happily met with you, perhaps equally for your glory and his deliverance." While she spoke, her servants came up to them. "These also, said she, shall assist you in whatever manner you please to make use of them: take them therefore to share with you in so pious an office." Having uttered these

B 2 words,

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words, she remained breathless. The stranger took up his helmet and sword, and whilst his servants were leading his horse to him, he thus replied: "Lady, I am but just now landed in Sicily, and being a stranger may well stand excused for not knowing the name of Poliarchus; but I shall think myself indebted to fortune, if my arrival should prove the means of deliverance to so gallant a gentleman as you have reported him to be." Thus saying, he mounted his horse, and entreated the lady to direct him on the way. He had only two servants with him; one being armed followed his master, the other was left to guard the baggage, which could not be packed up for carriage upon so short a notice.

And now being come to the wood's side, the entrance dividing itself into several paths, so confounded the lady's memory, that, doubtful which way she should take to find Poliarchus, she began a fresh lamentation. The stranger being startled, was in doubt whether to stop or to go forwards,

wards, when suddenly the wood resounded with the cries of men, clashing of arms, and trampling of horses, which recalled to his mind the present danger; for three armed men came forward spurring their horses, with looks bespeaking extreme fear or desperate courage. He suspecting treachery, and doubtful of the lady's faith, demanded if these were the assassins she mentioned. Then raising his spear, which no man better knew how to use, aimed it directly at them, resolving that, at least, he would not fall unrevenged; but they, who sought only to escape from their conqueror, turned away, and betook themselves to flight: and that Poliarchus, for whom the lady was so anxious, followed the chase alone, and overtaking the hindmost, struck him with such force, that he clove him from the neck down to the waist. He fell, and the victor eagerly pursued the others; but, galloping over rough and uneven ground, his horse stumbled, and gave him a sudden but a harmless fall. The lady speedily

leaped from her horse, and came to his assistance; but he, feeling neither his fall, nor two wounds he had received in the fight, rose up lightly, with his sword in his hand, and learning from Timoclea, (for that was the lady's name) how she had met with the stranger, and how readily he had offered his assistance, delayed not to pay his acknowledgments for so great a favour; but he, quitting his horse, saluted Poliarchus, saying, "Most valiant sir, had I known your worth, I should have blamed this lady's fear and anxiety, which obliges me to ask your pardon for presuming to offer needless assistance to such invincible courage as yours. Yet the victory you obtained over three armed men, though it be a great action, is the less wonderful, when I consider with what force you punished the hindmost, and how just a reason the others had for their flight." Poliarchus, being himself most courteous, thanked the stranger for his intended assistance, ascribing the flight of his enemies to their cowardice,

ardice, rather than to his own valour. After this they mutually embraced and saluted each other; and now, having leisure, they began to observe not only what they said, but to whom they were speaking, and were each of them struck with admiration at the similar qualities they perceived in each other: their age, beauty, and graceful shape, the spirit that shone in their eyes, and, though in different persons, the same majesty of deportment: such beauty accompanied with such qualities was almost miraculous. Timoclea also admired, that fortune should bring together such a pair by such an accident, declaring that, with their permission, she would dedicate a table, with the portraits of both, done by the most skilful painter, to the temple of Venus Ericyna; and, though many accidents deferred the performance of this vow, she a long time after paid it faithfully, and underneath the following verses were inscribed.

Such rosy cheeks, high fronts, and radiant eyes,
Such perfect forms we view with glad surprise!

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'Tis more than human beauty : not more bright
Shines glorious Phœbus at meridian height ;
Nor Læda's sons, whose aid amidst the waves
The sinking mariner devoutly craves.
Not brighter Mars, when clad in Lemnian arms,
Or when enraptur'd with fair Venus' charms.
In these fair portraits shall to ages shine,
The form majestic, and the face divine.

When the young men had satisfied
their curiosity in viewing each other, Poli-
archus familiarly jested with the lady
concerning her fright, and asked after the
servants that were missing. Whilst she
was giving an account of these, the freed-
man of Poliarchus, and two men servants
of Timoclea, returned out of the wood;
and at a distance they espied the maid
servant, unable to govern her horse, and
beating it to no purpose. They could not
but smile at the sight, and yet they made
haste to assist her. The stranger, in the
mean time, enquired of Poliarchus, what
was the cause of his being thus attacked
in the wood, whether the villains were
instigated by hatred, or set on merely by
the

the hope of plunder. But Timoclea prevented further discourse at this time, observing, that rest was necessary for them both, one coming from sea, and the other from fighting. "My house is not far off, said she; there you shall repose yourselves, and may have leisure for conversation." They were easily intreated by her who advised so well; and sending for the servant that was left to guard the baggage, they set forward together to Timoclea's house. By this time growing familiar, Poliarchus told the stranger, that he came from the king's camp early that morning, and was going to Agrigentum upon business; but that in the way he met with this lady, who was well known at court, and was returning from visiting the king's daughter, when the servants, riding carelessly, mistook the way, and lost themselves in the wood, only Timoclea with her woman servant keeping in the same path with him; when suddenly five men rushed out from a cross path, and assaulted him, while the lady,

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through

through her own and her servant's fright, turning aside, had most happily lighted on a stranger so full of valour and courtesy, as the person to whom he was addressing himself. "But (continued he) either my good fortune, or their wickedness, caused their blows to fail of success. With my javelin I slew the first that encountered me; the second with his sword rased the outside of my right thigh; another gave me a slight wound in my side, whom I sacrificed to my pain and indignation: I then struck another upon the head, when the rest turned their reins, and fled as cowardly as they had assaulted me basely. Then I turned and followed one so closely, that your eyes were witnesses of the chastisement he received at my hands, till at length my horse falling, gave the other two an opportunity to escape.

But who these men can be I cannot suspect, but conjecture they are either scouts from the camp of Lycogenes, who observed my coming; or else common robbers,

II

plunder.

CHAP. II.

Poliarchus and Archombrotus contract a mutual friendship while they remain at Timoclea's house. — The former gives an account of the state of Sicily, and of Lyco-genes's rebellion.

WHILE Poliarchus was speaking, they arrived at the lady's mansion, which was not far from Pthinthia, upon the banks of the river Hymara, bounded on one side by the river, on the other by a grove. The house itself was high and well built, commanding a beautiful prospect of the river and adjacent fields, while the wood and neighbouring hills added to the pleasantness of the situation. The family was large, and accommodated with such servants as became a lady who was herself an example of virtue and chastity: She had lately buried her husband; and her behaviour as a widow added to the lustre of her character.

This

This lady put an end to the conversation between her guests, by her kind greeting and grateful hospitality; and the decline of the day prevailed on them to accept her courtesy, and to sup and lodge there. While the supper was preparing, Poliarchus washed his wounds with vinegar and water, to prevent their inflaming, and afterwards anointed them with oil in which the flowers of ascyron had been steeped; thinking himself safer in using known and easy remedies, than in the hands of such surgeons as often make their gains by an artful and unnecessary delay.

Supper being brought in, and all being sat down together, Timoclea enquired with politeness and discretion of the stranger concerning his name and country, and whether he came to Sicily by chance or design? He answered, that he was of Africa, but that his parents had enjoined him to conceal his name and family, and till his return home he was commanded to call himself Archombrotus; but for the rest, he confessed freely that he was not compelled

compelled by contrary winds to seek the coast of Sicily, but came voluntarily, in order to improve himself by the society of wise and valiant men, whom fame had reported to abound in this kingdom. Poliarchus and Timoclea were equally surprized that Africa should produce a youth of such rare beauty, in which he far excelled his countrymen; besides, it spoke a great and noble spirit, to leave his country out of a desire to improve himself in virtuous and laudable knowledge. After supper, the stranger, in his turn, began to enquire of Poliarchus, how it happened that Sicily was infested with robbers? — Who that Lycogenes was out of whose company they might be supposed to come? — And what was the state of Sicily; and what was threatened it?

When they were retired to rest, (for they desired to lodge together) Poliarchus therefore began to open to him the present state of affairs in Sicily. Many virtues, Archombrotus, said he, degenerate

rate into vices ; and what is more strange, the same qualities, only as they suit the characters of the times, appear either virtues or vices.—Meleander (as I suppose you cannot be ignorant) now wears the crown of Sicily.—A prince of a mild and gentle disposition ; but not rightly judging of these times, he puts such confidence in others, as his own goodness of heart deserves from them. Perhaps it is no contradiction to say that his misfortunes arose from too much happiness, as sickness does sometimes from too great a flow of health.

In the beginning of his reign, finding all things in a state of peace, he gave himself up to his pleasures ; harmless ones indeed, and such as are common to princes ; but yet even these served to discover the easiness of his nature, and that he might be imposed on with impunity. He was immoderately fond of hunting, and by the different kinds of it he distinguished the seasons. He made friendships inconsiderately, and pursued them without discretion.

discretion. Prodigal in his bounties, impatient of business, he shook off the weight, leaving it to men incapable and unworthy, without gratitude or fidelity. — I would to heaven, Archombrotus, these things could be concealed; yet I would rather you should hear an account from me than from common report; for the king's enemies aggravate these matters, and make them appear much worse than in reality they are.

From such beginnings have proceeded all the mischiefs which have since fallen upon the head of this good king; chiefly by the envy and ambition of a certain man, named Lycogenes, who treacherously laid in wait to take advantage of the king's errors. This man, proud of his descent, which he derives from antient kings, was ever impatient of any superior; a man equally capable to advise and execute; with feigned humility courting the favour of the people by his flatteries, yet upon occasion exceeding all men in pride, cruelty, and falsehood.

He easily deceived Meleander, a prince of a gentle and ingenuous disposition; and while the king retired from business and cares, Lycogenes filled the court with men of his own faction; bestowed public offices upon all friends, as if every thing was in his disposal; and insinuated all that could be said to the king's disadvantage, till at last no part of the kingdom remained free from the infection.

And now pride and ambition armed the traitor against his sovereign, only not openly declaring himself. At length Meleander awakened, and recollected himself, and the duties of a king; in greatness of spirit inferior to none of his predecessors, when he pleases, of a deep apprehension, and not to be deceived but by his own easiness of disposition.

I cannot sufficiently describe the instances he hath given both of valour and prudence, since the vices of others have compelled him to make use of his own virtues. However, though he was certain of Lycogenes's treasonable practices, he

he forbore to use his power to do himself justice; thinking it sufficient for him to frustrate his enemy's designs, and to draw off some of his friends; as he even sometimes hoped by favours to reclaim that ungrateful man himself; but he, disdain-
ing to accept of pardon from any one, openly declared war against his prince; and this especially encouraged his ambition, — the king has an only daughter, upon whom the succession should naturally devolve — Would you think it, Archom-
brotus? — he had the boldness to aspire to marry the princess; nay, and to attempt compelling her to accept of him for a husband!

There is a castle at the mouth of the river Alabus, where the princess at that time resided; thither Lycogenes sent a party of ruffians, to surprize at once both the king and his daughter; but this treason took no effect, the villains perished in the attempt. Meleander attributes their deliverance to the goddess Pallas, and believes that by her assistance these ruf-
fians

fians were overthrown. He therefore shews every mark of gratitude to her; he commands her symbol to be stamped upon his coin; and ever since, at all public festivals, he wears no other crown but a wreath of olive. But what still more shows his noble and princely spirit, he has devoted his only daughter, so long as she remains unmarried, to the service of that goddess; and you may see her on public days, clothed in the vestments of a priestess; you may see her surrounded by a choir of priests and virgins, performing the holy rites of the goddess. Yet could not this devotion to heaven avert the horrors of a civil war. For this audacious and unpardonable attempt of Lycogenes, was followed by an open and violent rebellion. He complained that himself, an innocent man, was persecuted by the king, for treasons that could not be proved against him; he also insinuated, that the peoples wrongs were insupportable, and that they could not redress the injuries of those who missed the

the king but by taking arms against him. He was very powerful in faction and followers. — Oloödemus, Eristhenes, and Menocritus, governors of great provinces, were of his party. — Many out of levity of mind opposed the king, but more won by the dissimulation of this man, who pretended that he only fought for redress of grievances. At length, swollen with insolence and presumption, he offered battle to the king, who refused not the challenge. It is now but fifteen days since we met in the fields of Gelas; the engagement was bloody; for the rebels fought as bravely in defence of their wickedness, as we for the safety of the state. Towards evening the victory inclined to the king, when Lycogenes founded a retreat to his scattered troops, that instead of flying, they might appear to retire in good order; and the king suffered them to retreat, without pursuing his advantage farther; either desiring to spare the blood of his people, or else fearing ambushes in the night; perhaps

perhaps also he had cause to suspect the faith of some about him, for Lycogenes had many secret as well as declared partisans; there are many about the court who secretly favour the faction, though they appear on the side of the king. Thus is Meleander every way perplexed; the counsels of his nobility suspicious, his secrets betrayed to his enemies, and no less treachery against him in the court than in the field. He therefore applied himself to a treaty of peace, not confiding in his victory; and, as if the war were still going on, remaining yet in his encampment. Several messengers now passed between the two armies. Lycogenes sent ambassadors to the king, in appearance to obtain burial for the dead, but in reality to treat of peace; which they found so welcome to the king, that these insolent petitioners perceiving their own consequence, dared to prescribe the conditions to their conqueror. Meleander was glad to give them peace upon any terms, thinking if the people misled by Lycogenes were once dispersed,

dispersed, it would be difficult to get them to assemble again, and that time giving respite, the faction would of itself melt away to nothing, or grow odious to the people; or else, that, grown weary of novelties, the people might of themselves return to their obedience.

I confess, Archombrotus, I did not approve of this peace, but my youth, and the consideration of my country made me fearful to say any thing against it; for I also am a stranger like yourself, and nothing made me take the part of Meleander, but that his misfortune is an example to all nations, who can never enjoy a settled peace, if the subject may openly check his prince for his faults, while he lays snares for his virtues. Therefore while this uncertain peace is concluding, I chose to go to Agrigentum. I am curious in the choice of arms and weapons, and I have heard that excellent ones are made there by a stranger, a native of Lipara.

CHAP. III.

Archombrotus suspects Poliarchus's love. The beacons are fired. An account of that custom. Timoclea sends to enquire the occasion of the night alarm.

ARCHOMBROTUS greedily devoured the speech of Poliarchus, and taking the part of Meleander, and bitterly inveighing against the faction, he afterwards asked Poliarchus, of what age the King's daughter was, whom this bold rebel intended to make his prey; "for, said he, I have heard in Africa, that her name is Argenis, and that she is the paragon of beauty and virtue." At these words Poliarchus was seized with a trembling, and casting down his eyes, answered with some hesitation, that she was about twenty years of age. The stranger, taking notice of the alteration in his countenance, was desirous to discover the cause: he changed the subject, and spoke of Lycogenes, and

and of the treaty of peace ; and perceiving that Poliarchus had recollected himself, he again turned the discourse to Argenis, enquiring, whether her beauty and accomplishments were equal to their fame ; when, seeing Poliarchus as much disconcerted at the second attack, as at the first, being satisfied in a suspicion he had conceived, he endeavoured to divert the conversation to other subjects. He then asked him, who were the friends of Meleander ? The Gods, replied the youth, have not yet so entirely abandoned Sicily, but that there are some amongst them worthy of their high rank, and the King's favour. Among the most eminent is Cleobulus, a man excellent in counsel ; Eurimedes and Arsidas are famous warriors, and no less able statesmen ; there are also two foreigners of the order of Priesthood, true friends to Sicily, Ibburemes and Dimalbius, whose mediation the King chiefly used, that he might not seem to yield to dishonourable conditions with Lycogenes. I could name others, whose loyalty remains
unshaken

unshaken to their Sovereign; but these you will distinguish from the rest, by their virtues and loyal deportment, when you shall have resided some time in this court.

It was now grown late, and both being weary, they went to bed; but though they left off talking, yet did not their secret cares forsake their minds. Archombrotus ruminated upon the late battle, and grieved at the approaching peace! Where should he now exercise himself in feats of arms! how recommend his spirit and courage to the notice of Meleander! Then he reflected upon the behaviour of Poliarchus, admiring why he, so bold and dauntless in fight and fortunes, should be abashed at the name of a virgin, since, though his merits were great, yet neither his birth nor fortune seemed sufficient to encourage him to think of such a marriage: yet again he reflected, that if a private man loves the princess, there is no doubt but a man in love forgets every danger, and when a lover is assured of a return, he will run all hazards to deserve his fortune.

As for Poliarchus, he was racked between his fears and hopes, and long lay in a most uneasy state of suspense: at length they both fell asleep; but in a short time were disturbed by the noise of people running up and down in the house, and soon after, some of Timoclea's servants called at their door, and told them their lady was coming to the chamber. Astonished and heavy with their first sleep, they arose hastily, and put on their clothes, when issuing out, they met Timoclea in their way, who excused herself for disturbing them at that time of night. "There is some business of great importance on foot, my guests, said she, and so it is much the more alarming in that, being night, it is difficult for us to get any certain information of it. The beacons are lighted upon the hills, which it is death to fire unless by the king's orders, and when the safety of the state requires the utmost dispatch. So saying, she led them up to the top of the house, which was flat roofed, for the pleasure of walking,
from

from whence, the sky being clear, and the moon not shining, they saw plainly the fires, which blazed upon the summits of the hills. They had not gazed long, when from the neighbouring town, the confused murmurs of mens voices struck their ears, disturbing the silence of the night. The strangers now advised that the gates should be locked, to prevent robbers from taking advantage of the tumult, to commit some outrage; but Timoclea observed, whatever business it might be, that was thus publicly divulged and notified, they could not be too soon informed of it: “The town of Phthinthia, said she, is near, whither (if you my guests approve it) I will send a servant to learn the truth.” They approving her counsel, came down with her to the gate, and sent away her servant, with a command to discover the cause of this uproar. In the mean time they went into an apartment on the first floor, and placing the lady between them, they asked her, what was that custom in Sicily, and the use of it. “I have lived

about a year in Sicily, said Poliarchus, and this is the first time I have seen it."

"Have you not observed, returned Timoclea, that upon the summit of every high hill a tree is set, like the mast of a ship, and on its top a cavity bound round with iron hoops? I have, said Poliarchus. These, she proceeded, are the public trees, upon which fires being lighted by the King's commands, give signal to the people to hold themselves in readiness to execute his orders. They are called beacons, and the people who first see them, light up others upon the next hills, by which those still further off, receive warning, until, with admirable celerity, the alarm runs through the whole island. The people, in the mean time, arm themselves, and stand ready for the king's service, until a messenger arrives from the king, declaring his pleasure. From thence the citizens, upon fresh horses, ride post to the next towns, and so to other cities, with the same expedition. Thus the whole island is quickly raised, and ready to assist
the

the king. Neither are these fires lighted without some great necessity. Once before I have seen them, when search was made for traitors, who assaulted the king. The gods grant that they be not now kindled for some more shocking cause, and that they have not effected their intended mischief!" Poliarchus did not allow of their utility, and only said, smiling, "I expected, lady, that you would have derived this curious custom from the most ancient tradition of the lights, which Ceres, when robbed of her daughter, kindled from the vapours of mount *Ætna*: But can this sudden tumult benefit the state? and wherein is the prince better served by confusion in the night, than by regular and orderly directions in the day?" The lady replied, "This institution, Poliarchus, is not so useless as you suppose: Even the governors of the sea-ports, warned by these fires, chain up the harbours, and make ready their gallies, in case they should be wanted for a sea-fight. The people likewise, under their officers, stand to their

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arms;

arms; so that if an enemy should pass by those at sea, they find them prepared by land. There is also another use of these public fires, — if any delinquent, who is obnoxious to the laws, endeavours to fly out of Sicily to escape justice, he is thereby prevented; for after the beacons are fired, it is treason for any man to set sail from the ports; and whosoever harbours the criminal, becomes liable to the same punishment.”

From this discourse of Timoclea, they fell into other subjects, questioning among themselves, what might be the cause of this tumult. Poliarchus feared the worst; Lycogenes was not to be trusted, and Meleander lay open to treachery, as well from the infidelity of his servants, as from the greatness of his own spirit, disdaining to fear, though upon just grounds, and neglected to use such precautions as in his situation were become necessary.

While they were thus discoursing of the mischiefs of civil war, Timoclea showed her guests the following verses, which
Nico-

Nicopompus, a man eminent for learning,
and greatly in the king's favour, made
against Lycogenes, inveighing, with the
freedom of a poet, against his pride and
presumption, in aspiring to the crown of
Meleander, and the hand of Argenis, his
daughter.

What plague infests the peace of worldly states,
And threatens crowns and heaven-born potentates!
What fury does the people's rage provoke,
That thus they rush into a tyrant's yoke!
Disdaining to submit to lawful sway,
To lawless faction all their homage pay.
Faith, truth, and loyalty, to heaven are fled,
And rage and discord govern in their stead.
So when proud Earth, from her dark bowels freed
Her giant brood, she urg'd their impious deed,
Shew'd them the heav'nly mansions from afar,
And urg'd the monsters to provoke the war;
Who hop'd to heav'n by hills on hills to come;
But Jove's own bolts their monstrous bulks entomb,
And hide again in their proud mother's womb. }
And thou, this kingdom's ominous portent!
Like the new-horn'd Cerastes violent!
The land's disturber, wilfully misled
To seize the father's crown, the daughter's bed,
Shalt seek in vain; and to thy more disgrace,
Ixion like, an empty cloud embrace.

Much shalt thou suffer here, and after death
Thy soul to endless tortures shall bequeath :
Thy trembling limbs, bound to the racking wheel,
On liver shall th' infernal vulture feel ;
On thy vile corpse, struck by the Thunderer
Ætna, the tomb of monsters, shall inter ;
Where flames Enceladus still breathing yields. —
Oh Phœbus, if Pelorus' flowery fields
Repos'd and fed those sacred herds of thine !
Hercules, Ceres, Venus Ericyne !
Ye foreign gods, ye native deities,
To whom Sicilia offers sacrifice !
Protect the cause of lawful kings, that they
May safely honours to your altars pay !

CHAP. IV.

*Timoclea's servant brings tidings, that Poliar-
archus is proclaimed a traitor, and that
the beacons were fired in order to take
him.*

WHILE they were reading these lines, news was brought, that Timoclea's messenger was returned. All the family flocked about him, desirous to know the truth of what they yet feared to enquire about; but the servant deeming it improper to publish the news he brought before the strangers, called his lady aside, and to her disclosed the secret. She was amazed, and the man himself trembled: at length Timoclea, being endued with great presence of mind, took him into an inner room, that his fellows might not question him, and desiring her guests to follow them, she shut the door, and commanded her servant to relate before them what he had heard. "When I entered the town (said he) I met with many going

to and fro, scarcely knowing whither they went. At every door was a light, and the people, gathering in circles, stood like men struck dumb with surprise. I joined myself to the first company, and heard them say, that Poliarchus was charged with treason, and sought for to be punished, and for this cause the beacons were fired. I, thinking they might mistake the name, asked what Poliarchus this was, and what might be his offence. They told me it was Poliarchus the stranger, who had lived above a year in Sicily, famous in arms, and till now in high favour with the king. Of his fault they were ignorant; but knew that he was condemned by the king, and by his order sought for every where with the utmost diligence. Passing on to another company, I found they all agreed in the same story : so thinking the matter certainly true, I made haste home to give you information."

At this report Archombrotus and Timoclea fixed their eyes upon Poliarchus :
he

he pale and trembling, not with guilt or fear, but scorn of the danger and impatience of the reproach, asked the servant if he spoke the truth, and then enquired of the lady, if her servant were in his right mind. He walked about in a strange perplexity, like a man in a dream; but kept silence some moments, lest, in so great a conflict of mind, he might let fall from him words of complaint against fortune, or disrespectful words against the king; but as the importance of the business, and the doubt whether he could trust to that house for his safety, would admit of no delay; at last, lifting up his hands and eyes to heaven, "Ye gods of Sicily, said he, and all ye heavenly powers that protect virtue; ye genii and household gods of Meleander; who have received and entertained me as a guest, I invoke and adjure you, I call you to witness, if I have any way wronged the king or the state of Sicily; if on my part I have forfeited the privilege of hospitality, or in any respect deserved to be stigmatised

with this public mark of treason and infamy. If I have been guilty, then do you give me up to punishment, and let me perish by a shameful death, by the hands of my bitterest enemies ! But if I have used my utmost endeavours and abilities for the good of this kingdom, and this calamity falls upon me undeservedly, then grant, oh ye gods, that I may prove my innocence both to the king and people, and depart this island in peace and safety, not leaving behind me a base and an ignoble name and memory ! For you, lady, I will by no means involve you in my danger ; but this very night I will go forth into the fields, and free your house from the infection of my misfortunes.” Archombrotus at this was plunged in anxiety, and so far had one day’s acquaintance endeared Poliarchus to him, that he offered to run all hazards with him. By their countenance, speech and gestures, one could not discover whose was the danger, only Archombrotus seemed by far the most angry.

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The lady, dissembling her thoughts, said she would send again for a more certain account. In the mean time she ordered her servant to stay in that room, and conveyed her guests into a more private one, to advise further with them.

C H A P. V.

Timoclea courteously offers her assistance to preserve Poliarchus. Pretending to leave her, he descends into a vault belonging to the house, which leads to the river Hymæra.

BEING retired from observing eyes, Timoclea gave vent to her grief, and lamented the hard fate of Poliarchus, of whose innocence she doubted no more than of the truth of the king's displeasure; for she knew the discretion of her servant too well to doubt of the certainty of his report. She freely offered her house and assistance to Poliarchus in whatever manner he pleased, to use both for his safety: "But alas! said she, recollecting herself, what can this house or its mistress, or the aid of Archombrotus, do against the king? the soldiers will soon be here in arms, and breaking open the house discover us, or beat it down and bury us in the ruins:
we

we cannot hope, that all my family will keep the secret, but that some one, if you remain here, will discover it. Yet I have still a resource for you, Poliarchus, if you will accept it, that will be the means of concealing you till this danger is past. The first builders of this house contrived a vaulted room under ground, that is this day unknown to any but myself : there are three different passages to it, which have as many trap-doors opening into the fields : there most easily may you lie concealed, and escape the designs of your enemies. I would have you pretend to take leave of me, as if affrighted at this rumour, and seem to depart, to free me from the danger of harbouring you, and yourself from that of being taken as a criminal. As soon as you pass my gates, there is a row of trees that lead to the river Hymæra, and which will direct you to the mouth of the cave, which is near the river side. I, without any one's knowledge, will come thither, by the passages from my house, with a lighted torch. There I will,

will, by the help of the gods, receive and preserve you in safety till this storm is blown over. I judge it proper, that Archombrotus should be privy to this secret, it being impossible, that a man of his generous disposition should betray us; but I think it should not be discovered to your freed-man, lest by the fear of punishment, or hope of reward, he should prove false and discover you."

Poliarchus gave thanks to Timoclea for her friendship, and accepted her offer for that night only; for that he would stay no longer in the cave, than till he had discovered what infernal spirit had been at work, to stir up the king and all Sicily against him: but he could by no means consent to conceal this secret from his freed-man, of whose fidelity he was secure, and whose services at this time would avail him very much. As to Archombrotus he would not so much as ask him to be silent, thinking | himself worthy of a worse misfortune, if he could have a doubt of his honour and fidelity.

Having

Having thus determined, they left the room, and soon after, Poliarchus, compleatly armed as for fighting, went out at the gate. The servants enquiring among themselves the reason of his sudden departure, he told them, that those beacons were fired to raise a search for him, and that he fled, lest they should either be forced to betray him, or else to suffer with him: then taking a formal leave of Timoclea and Archombrotus, he mounted his horse, as intending for a long journey, and his servant following him, he took the way which the lady had directed.

The suddenness and extremity of the danger and the shame attending it, greatly afflicted the young Poliarchus. “Oh madman that I was, Gelanorus, said he, to put this life into any man’s power! Why should I thus in a manner and dress unsuitable to my birth and station wander about in a strange country? What else doth the fable teach us by Lycaon’s treacherous design to murder Jupiter his unknown guest, but that princes come to
untimely

untimely ends by trusting themselves in the power of strangers, not more through the wickedness of such than through their own folly; I have laid myself open to injuries, and I suffer but what I have deserved."

While he spoke thus, he called to mind the cause of his stay in Sicily, and deeply affected with the recollection; he feared that he had offended in complaining of the danger that was excited by so dear a hope; he therefore paused and kept silence, till Gelanorus, alarmed at his lord's danger, advised him, without further dissimulation, to discover his birth and fortunes to the king, urging, that if he should throw off the mask, and assume his own greatness, Meleander would remit his sentence, and his enemies ask pardon for the affront they had put upon him. "Thou art mistaken, answered Poliarchus; after the injury I have received, it concerns me still more to be concealed: the knowledge of my quality would but inflame them the more against me, and thinking that I could be but once released, but should never forget the injury."

To

To this observation Gelanorus made no reply, being uncertain what was best to be done: looking up he invoked all the stars that then shone upon them, to direct and assist himself and his lord.

In the mean time, Timoclea ordered her gates to be shut, and her servants to go to bed, saying, she would have no further disturbance that night, but in the morning they should enquire into the truth of these reports. Afterwards she went into all their chambers, as if to give orders about her household affairs; but indeed to prevent any one from prying into her secret design. Then, when all was quiet, she went with Archombrotus into a closet, in which the cunning artificer had concealed the private passage into the cave. The room was boarded, the planks seemingly joined together, but two were left loose, that they might easily be taken up, and over these stood a long table to prevent treading upon them, lest any one should discover the secret.

Removing

Removing this, and taking up the boards, she opened the mouth of the vault, and lighting up torches, she descended the stairs. Archombrotus follows with his sword in his hand for their defence. There were twenty steps into a kind of gallery, which after advancing a little way, appeared divided into three different passages : so that in case one avenue were beset, there was still a hope left to escape by the others. The soil was remarkably proper for the work, being so firm, that where it was dug nothing would fall away ; neither were there any stones to hinder the pioneer, nor sand to frustrate his labour. This long cave, with an arched roof, sustained the whole weight of the house ; yet, in so many years, was not injured. In the entrance it was plaistered, that it might be ornamented by pictures and devices, alluding to the place and purpose ; but the moisture of the air, never visited by the celestial lights, had defaced most of the figures. There was yet, however, to be seen the design of an altar, and a man casting incense
into

into the flame of it, over which the following verses might with some difficulty be made out.

Ye gods below, that here your worship have !
Be this Jove's palace, or grim Pluto's cave ;
Or if the pow'r, whose blue arms do infold
Earth's globe, his three-fold scepter here
doth hold !

This vault still faithful to its lords maintain,
Nor theft, nor treachery, its darkness stain.
Hence fly, ye furies, with terrific light !
No horrid shapes, nor hideous noise affright !
Let peaceful rest and silence still appear,
While this chaste family burn incense here.
All guilty souls let hell-born horrors fright,
While virtue here enjoys a quiet night !

Archombrotus read these lines hastily;
for his thoughts being employed on Poli-
archus, soon withdrew him from further
observations.

C H A P. VI.

A discourse between Archombrotus and Timoclea, concerning courtiers and kings favourites.

ARCHOMBROTUS enquiring of Timoclea concerning Poliarchus, she told him, that Poliarchus, from his first arrival in Sicily, had been very highly beloved and trusted by the king, and had so behaved himself as to escape the envy and jealousy of all the good men in Sicily. “But I think, continued she, an ill fate commonly attends the favourites of princes.” “That is true, said he; and the cause of their ruin arises sometimes from themselves, and sometimes from their masters; but this man, of so great merit and virtue himself, and serving so good and just a king, see what fortune hath befallen him! We might easily quote examples of such men as abusing their master’s favour, and insulting the people,
have

have justly deserved the fate that overtook them: but what are these to Poliarchus, whose virtue, like a sun, enlightened all the sphere of Sicily? If princes reward their most faithful servants in this manner, they deserve not the services of men of honour and ability, but to become a prey to wicked and designing men. But then, said Archombrotus, you would leave no privileges to princes, if they may neither chuse nor change their ministers. This is not denied to private men, and royalty without it would be insupportable." "Truly, said Timoclea, you cannot in these cases acquit either princes or their favourites of blame; for such kings (if we may speak the truth) who are given to make favourites, are generally as fond of changing them. They bestow their favour rashly, and take it away without a cause. When they grow sick of old friendships, they refresh themselves with new ones: they are, like men in an ague, subject to fits of heat and cold, and hatred is sure to be the end of

of their loves. Again, there are some, who continually raise new favourites without ruining old ones, and by this method fill their courts with envy, faction, and contests. They are the most constant masters, but not the safest or best, who, knowing themselves unfit for business, and unable to bear the burthen of state affairs, chuse some man of ability, and lay the whole weight of government on him, trusting not only the state, but themselves in his hands, and commonly with great unhappiness to both, often to their ruin; and this because they had no more judgment in chusing a man to govern for them, than they had in governing for themselves: in consequence of which conduct, they first dislike, then fear, next suspect, and lastly hate, the person whom they have thus set above themselves. The favourite, on his part, in time forgets that he is but a servant, grows insolent and oppressive, and at length intolerable both to king and people; or, if he be blameless, the king, out of
the

the same weakness of judgement by which he chose him, grows tired of him, and inclines to another. You smile, my noble guest, to hear a woman argue upon these subjects; but our public disturbances have made such arguments so common, that most women apprehend them, and even discourse upon them with propriety."

Archombrotus being an advocate for kingly power, defended it on this occasion. "I confess, lady, said he, that kings often err in the choice and the treatments of their favorites; but how often do they by their misconduct pull down ruin upon themselves? Some, not rightly considering their master's disposition, are negligent in improving those qualities that first recommended them to his favour, or else by incessant importunities for themselves and their friends surfeit the stomach of their patron. Others are lost by their insatiable desires, who though they are overwhelmed with their master's bounty, grudge every thing that goes beside them, and endeavour to tie up their prince's hands with regard to

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others. Thus it happens, that those who might retire from publick employment to an honourable retreat seem as if they chose rather to be disgracefully driven away from court. When this honour is conferred upon men of a weak brain, it presently overturns them. You know how well Phaeton used his chariot, and Icarus his wings; yet no man blames Jupiter or Phœbus for their punishment."

"But, said Timoclea, whether they stand or fall is of little consequence, if compared with the mischief this blind partiality occasions to princes, upon whom depends the safety or ruin of a state. I was bred up in a court, and have been told by the best and wisest of men, that a prince, conscious of the importance of his own station and abilities, ought never to favour any person so much as to condescend to take the side of a party or faction: for when men become objects of the public envy or hatred, by too great power, and are protected by their sovereign, so that they cannot be wounded but through his sides, the

the disorder continually increafes, till at length the king himfelf is blamed, and his name infulted ; becaufe thofe, who dare boldly accufe him, depend upon his weaknefs in bearing injuries as well as on chufing favorites. But nothing can be more lamentable than the effects of human blindnefs : kings think to make themfelves friends by their immoderate bounty ; whereas their gifts too often extinguifh the flame of true loyalty ; for fo long as men are unsupported, and like ivy want a tree to lean to, fo long will they fupport the king ; but, after they are grown ftrong enough to fupport themfelves, they rely on their own greatnefs, and loofe their boughs from the tree that fufained them, that, in cafe it fhould fall, they may ftand fafely. To fpeak plainly, they feparate their intereft from their prince's, and what they owe to him they pay to themfelves : for they know, that if the king fhould withdraw his favour, he may come to fee his errors, and fear the power he has raifed ; it has been often feen, when

a favourite has been raised too high by his king, that one of the two must fall. Therefore, no wonder if such men wisely consult their own safety, anticipate the suspicions that may arise, and make use of their influence in the state to provide for their own security. Thus do they betray their trust, and the honour of their king. Sometimes indeed, but very rarely, there is found a virtue that this fortune cannot corrupt, and of this Poliarchus is a singular instance; who neither stained his faith or loyalty to the king, nor grew insolent with the favours of fortune: so that, in this, his great misfortune, I can only blame destiny."

C H A P. VII.

Timoclea and Archombrotus receive Poliarchus into the cave. They debate concerning his conduct. Gelanorus addresses his lord to remain concealed, and suffer him to spread the report of his death; which is immediately put in practice.

WITH such discourses they beguiled the way, until Timoclea showed Archombrotus the mouth of the cave, which was easily opened. Two bars on the inside held the stone so fastened into the ground, that no force from without could remove it; but those within could with ease lift them sideways out of the grooves, in which they were so fixed, that they could not slip from the weight of the door. Having then drawn the bars, and rolled the stone aside, Archombrotus opened the cave, and Timoclea going out waved the torch in her hand, the signal agreed upon with Poliarchus, and immediately

hid its light, lest she should give notice to some unwelcome guest. He stood by the river's side expecting the token, which being given, he approached the lady; but was doubtful how to dispose of his own and his servant's horses, till Gelanorus advised him to go into the cave, and consult what was best to be done, "and till you resolve, said he, about the horses, they shall stand tied up among yonder alder-trees." While Poliarchus descended into the cave, Gelanorus tied up the horses and came to them. Having received him, and made fast the door, they betook themselves to counsel. Poliarchus thought it best to send his servant abroad, to make enquiry after the state of his affairs, to know what crime he was charged with, what caused this rigorous treatment from the king; and above all, to know what friends in this danger continued faithful to him. "You advise well, said Timoclea, if you did not know, that the first question men will ask Gelanorus will be, where you are concealed. I doubt not his fidelity, but if he fall
among

among your enemies, perhaps they may by tortures extort the secret from him. Gelanorus answered, scornfully, that where his lord's safety was concerned, no racks or tortures should force any thing from him.

Then he told them, he had thought on a device to delude his enemies; which was, that he should behave like one under a great consternation, and if any suspected person should enquire after Poliarchus, he with a countenance and tone proper to express his grief, would say, that Poliarchus his lord had left this light, as indeed he had. If they enquired what kind of death, he would frame this story, that affrighted at the proclamation he fled, and crossing the river Hymæra he fell from his horse, and being loaden with his armour was swallowed up by the waves. (For it happened at this time that the river was swelled above the banks, as if on purpose to give colour to the tale.) I will add further, said he, that I saw but could give no assistance to my lord, who was by the furious torrent

carried into the sea. By this fiction, the report of your death will be spread abroad, than which nothing can be more convenient for our affairs. It will satisfy and assuage the fury of your enemies, and raise compassion in many others, who, although they envy virtue in prosperity, will speak gloriously of it when undeservedly ruined. After this is believed, the embargo upon the ships in port will be discharged, and you may either lie concealed or escape from Sicily : nor can we contrive any safer kind of death, than this which leaves no remains of you. I will also let your horse go where he will, as if his master's death had given him his liberty." This invention of Gelanorus pleased them all ; but Poliarchus told him, if he should meet with Arsidas, whom of all the Sicilians he most loved and trusted, he should tell him all, and intreat him to visit and comfort one so oppressed with injuries : or if he could not do that, at least, that he would trust to Gelanorus to tell him, what it concerned him to know.

Furnished with these instructions, they
sent him away. Gelanorus, Archom-
D 5 brotus,

brotus, and Timoclea could make no long stay with Poliarchus, fearing the suspicions of the servants now rising to their household duties, who are generally most diligent when one least desires it; for them to discover their lady's care of Poliarchus would be at once to ruin both. They therefore intreated him to make Virtue his companion, which can neither deserve affliction, nor be dejected under it when undeserved. Then promising him their company at all convenient opportunities, the lady shewed him a couch to lie down upon, and gave him lights; for she had brought many; which done, they retired to their respective apartments.

How Poliarchus' thoughts were employed you may understand by this, that he thought not so much of preserving his life, as of some noble way to lose it, his chief concern being only that he knew some lives, that he prized far above his own, depended upon his safety.

C H A P. VIII.

An account of those men whom Poliarchus slew. Gelanorus deceives Timonides by a feigned account of his master's death; but afterwards reveals the whole truth to Arsidas.

AFTER Gelanorus had set his master's horse at liberty, he mounted his own, and set forward on his appointed way. Being come almost to the wood where Poliarchus had fought the day before, he perceived three litters, with men on horseback attending, followed by a company of foot. As he greatly desired to know what this solemn pomp might be, he approached them, and soon discovered that it was a funeral solemnity, and the men in mourning. Struck with this tragic omen, he demanded of one of the train, whose obsequies they then celebrated. He answered, they were for the bodies of the ambassadours, whom

Poliarchus, the day before, against the laws of nations had slain. Gelanorus was amazed, and wondered within himself what funeral rites, or what fraud this might be; and desirous to know the certainty of his master's offence, and his enemies devices, he joined the company, till he perceived the dead body of him whom Poliarchus had slain at the wood's side as he fled, taken up into one of the litters. Then it appeared plainly, that the men who attacked Poliarchus, were indeed the ambassadors of Lycogenes to Meleander. But why was the revenge to follow so suddenly? Why should not Poliarchus be allowed to answer for himself? Are then ambassadors privileged to be robbers and assassins? Or was the king more favourable to his enemies than his friends? Ought not rather the victor to be rewarded for his valour, and the bodies of these infamous ambassadors to be hung upon a gibbet, rather than to be honoured with a pompous funeral? These thoughts excited the rage and choler of Gelanorus,

norus, infomuch that he could scarcely fuppress his emotions, and fearing left his voice or countenance fhould betray him, he thought it beft to leave that fpectacle, which fo much offended him : execrating, therefore, his mafter's enemies, he took the fhorteft way to the camp of the king. Being come to the other fide of the wood, he met many on that road ; for, by reafon of its neighbourhood to the camp, it was much frequented ; at length he met Timonides, a man of note in the king's houfehold, and of high efteem in the court : he alfo, careful for Poliarchus, came abroad purpofely to learn what was become of him. Knowing Gelanorus, he thus faluted him : “ Oh happily met ! tell me where, during all this tumult, is our Poliarchus ? But he, remembering the part he was to act, hardly lifting up his dejected eyes, briefly answered, Poliarchus is no more ! At this, love and pity overcoming all fears in Timonides, and ftanding like one ready to prophecy, with many fighs he broke out into thefe words,

“ Unfor-

“Unfortunate Meleander! unhappy Sicily!” then turning his horse rode away, leaving Gelanorus, to whom it was no small comfort to see his lord’s feigned death so sincerely lamented. But Timonides had not rode far, when he turned back again, saying, “Tell me, Gelanorus, what was the fatal end of the noblest and worthiest of men?” Gelanorus answered him with the concerted story, and how he was drowned in the river Hymæra. Timonides burst afresh into grief, and full of those heavy tidings, returned to court to relate the matter to the king. He had not rode far before he met with Arsfidas, to whom he imparted this story, filling him with horror at the recital. This faithful man then demanded where Gelanorus was, and Timonides shewed him coming on the way: then spurring his horse he made haste to reach the camp, whilst Arsfidas meeting Gelanorus, and saluting him hastily, began to enquire after his lord. The servant told him, that he brought a secret for his ear, but that place was too public

public for it; but if he would turn aside out of the way of observation, he would follow him. Arsidas consented, and now began to entertain hope, because Gelanorus had not yet mentioned any thing of his master's death.

They then withdrew separately to a solitary place in the next valley: being met, Gelanorus began, "Oh Arsidas, Poliarchus lives: but he desires earnestly that none but yourself may know it. Briefly, he is concealed in a cave under the lady Timoclea's house by her kindness and fidelity: he sent me to seek you, and to learn what wind hath raised this tempest against him; and if you disdain not a man in affliction, he greatly desires to see you." Arsidas answered, that he would meet any danger to see his beloved friend, and desired Gelanorus to lead him directly to the cave. Nay, said the prudent servant, we must first use some art to deceive Timoclea's attendants, lest they should suspect Poliarchus to be there concealed, and so the fate of

so excellent a man should depend upon the faith of base peasants. I will go before, and feign to lament his death, while you, Arfidas, deceive all those you meet with the feigned story you heard: about noon you may come to Timoclea's house, as if to rest yourself during the heat of the day; hence it can raise no suspicion, for you to come to visit a lady so long and well known to you. One thing more I must advertise you of, there is a young man, who but yesterday arrived in Sicily, if he speaks truly he comes from Africa: when you see him you will admire his person, when you hear him speak you will more admire his understanding; his love to Poliarchus exceeds belief, to whom, upon one day's acquaintance only, he adheres most firmly in this his distress. His behaviour is such as must banish all suspicion of his faith both with you and my lord; he is fully acquainted with my commission to you, and is one of our best advisers on this perilous occasion."

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These things being settled, they parted, Gelanorus taking the shortest way to Timoclea's house, Arfidas more leisurely keeping on in the high road. In the mean time, Timonides spread every where the tragical news, telling all he met the story of Poliarchus's death; the report of which was variously received, according as the hearers were inclined, with extreme joy or sorrow. Meleander had appointed that day to cross the river Hipfa, and go to Magella, to meet his daughter Argenis, who, by his command, was come thither from Syracuse. While they were preparing for the journey, the king walked in a valley hard by, accompanied by his nobles, himself full of doubts, that many who attended him out of duty were secretly his enemies. When Timonides came to the royal tent, and told his friends what he had heard of the death of Poliarchus, the report was presently spread in the army, and easily believed. At length Timonides, urged by

by his grief, went and spoke to the king. "We have great reason to be sure now, sire, to be thankful to Lycogenes, (said he) Poliarchus is dead." The king at these words stood amazed and perplexed with various thoughts and passions. The loss of this excellent young man the more afflicted him, for that he feared that his hard fate would be imputed to himself. At length his tears burst out, a presage of his evil fortune to come; yet he thought it dangerous to lament him publicly, because many of Lycogenes's friends were present to observe every look, word, and gesture. Composing his countenance, therefore, he retired to his tent, enquiring by the way the particulars of the fate of Poliarchus, being certain that none would rejoice at this event, but those who sought also his own ruin. The king's presence restrained the soldiers from public lamentations; but many of the nobility with sighs declared their concern, that such a man should be so cast away. The king
carefully

carefully distinguished these from the rest, as most worthy of his love and trust. He could hardly behold them without blushing, apprehending their thoughts of him as the murderer of Poliarchus.

CHAP. IX.

The report of Poliarchus's death comes to the ears of Argenis, the king's daughter. Her grief and despair. Seleniffa prevents her laying violent hands on herself.

WHILE the army were preparing for their march, the report of Poliarchus's death spread quickly among the people, and reached as far as Magella. The princess was sitting in her chamber, dressing herself among her attendants, not with so much state and grandeur as was used in peaceable times, yet in a manner not unbecoming a princess. Seleniffa was governess to Argenis, and was privy to all her secrets, and was busy in plaiting her hair, when one of the maidens came in with the report of the death of Poliarchus, which Argenis at first heard not, being in discourse with Seleniffa concerning the firing of the beacons, and the malice of Poliarchus's enemies: but the
maiden's

maiden's words struck Seleniffa with fear and astonishment. She secretly made signs to the women to speak lower; but their whisperings by this time had filled the chamber.

The princess, struck with horror, enquired what ill news they were muttering among themselves. Seleniffa prevented their answer, saying, they had broken a fine vase, which the king, her father, presented to her on her birth-day, and the fear of their lady's anger kept them whispering. But Argenis, now struck with fears and doubts, would not be so satisfied: she therefore sprang from her seat, and catching the maid by the hand, who brought the news, looking at her with sparkling eyes, "If, said she, thou darest tell me a falsehood, know this for the last day thou shalt ever come in my sight. Tell me then, instantly, whether thou hast heard any ill tidings concerning the king." She, willing to comfort her, answered, "No, madam: all that we hear of the king is, that he is well, and a conqueror,

conqueror, and will soon be here ; but to season this great felicity we must bear with a loss ; Poliarchus, alas ! is no more.”— Never was any one so confounded as Argenis, never did any one struggle more to conceal it. She called up all her spirits, at the same moment resolving and deferring her own death ; and because she would not give any cause for suspicion to her woman, she thus replied, “ I doubted not that the gods would take care of the king, and that he would put an end to all our disturbances ;” but she durst not mention Poliarchus, lest his name should overcome her resolution ; but finding she could no longer dissemble her grief, she withdrew hastily into her closet, shutting the door, lest any should prevent her fatal intention : but Selenissa followed her closely, and withheld her hand from the bolt, and under a shew of service, shut herself in with her lady.

Then Argenis gave vent to her grief. She burst into tears, she tore off her lovely hair, and scattered it on the ground. There stood

stood a couch of ivory covered with purple, upon this she threw herself in all the agonies of grief and despair. Selenissa kept silence, waiting till this storm should subside, but when she saw her grief grow greater, and perceived her lift up her hands and eyes to heaven, speaking inwardly to herself, and at last holding a sharp knife to her throat; she ran up to her in the midst of agony, and held her arm in her trembling hand; she endeavoured to chide her rashness as it deserved, but her continual sighs and sobbings prevented her speech. They remained some time in this wretched state; the one not able to use the weapon, nor the other to take it away; both seemingly resolute, and with eyes fixed on each other. At length the princess reclined her head upon her shoulder, and looking carelessly on Selenissa, cried, "It is to no purpose that you prevent my purpose, I can find means to die!—Hitherto you have taught me well, to be constant, grateful, and pious. —Why do you now go about to alter my resolution?"

resolution? It ought to be a comfort and an honour both to you and me, that I go with my faith and chastity unspotted to my grave. Think you that I will outlive Poliarchus? He preserved me from Lycogenes, and I will repay him with my life. Is it not I that have killed Poliarchus?—I have been the cause of his death, and I will expiate it with my own blood.—What had he to do in Sicily, but for Argenis?”—At these words she swooned away, oppressed with grief, the knife fell from her hand, and she fainted on Selenissa, who could scarcely support her. But she used every argument she could think of, lamenting her situation, yet still believing that her grief would abate after it had vented itself; observed her lady, and put her in mind that her father’s life depended upon her’s; for that if she died, he who was already broken with cares and publick sorrows, would quickly follow to the grave. She told her she was as the purple and fatal lock of hair, upon which depended the safety of her father, and the kingdom;

kingdom; which if she should cut off, as Scylla did that of Nisus, for the love of Minos, she would be guilty of a double parricide. And asked, if she did not think that fame would not report ill of that chastity, that could not out-live so violent a passion: but all this was spoken to deaf ears. Perceiving the princess obstinate in her fatal resolution, she tells her she will not stand by and see her act this tragedy, and unless she would promise to live she would call for help; so saying, she goes towards the door, when her mistress pulling her back by her garment, embracing her; “ Oh! my mother, said she, why will you not suffer me to escape so great a sorrow?—Do you think, if I were dead, Poliarchus would outlive me?—You cannot deceive me, Selenissa!—I have from my infancy been obedient to your advice, to your precepts—and that which you now forbid me, being done, you will approve.—If ought of human form survives on the tomb, Poliarchus still survives, and still loves

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me; I shall go to the embraces of my husband, and without envy our ghosts shall be united in the shades below. If I thus escape shame and sorrow, I shall not (I tremble to speak it!) I shall not kneel to the murderer of Poliarchus! You know well by whose command the beacons were fired, can you doubt from whence his destruction proceeded!—But he is my father, and it were impious in me to hate him; so I will divide my love between my father and my lover, laying down my life for both, because I can neither hate nor favour either.” Selenissa, on her part, urged the baseness of self-murder, proceeding from disappointed love; and at last, lighting upon a happier thought, “Why, said she, do we lament Poliarchus as certainly dead? Why believe rumour, which so often is proved a common liar? Have you not read of the fatal error of Pyramus, a fable composed on purpose to shew the danger of taking a rash resolution upon an uncertain report? Who knows but you might bring Poliarchus

archus to the same fate, to which Pyramus brought his Thisbe. Reflect how many false rumours are abroad. Who saw his body? Who knows what was the manner of his death? Perhaps he is now in safety, and despising the threats of his enemies. Send, at least, some one who may bring a more certain account, and content to live for this purpose, lest by your death you should destroy him living."

Argenis upon this raised her head, and said, with a melancholy air, "With what vain hope dost thou prolong my sorrow! thou mayest not with this invention deceive thyself nor me. Yet thus much I will give to Poliarchus, or rather to the gods; I will *rashly* believe that heaven would permit so vile an action, upon this condition, that when we shall know him to be certainly dead, you shall not hinder me from following him." The old woman rejoiced at this beginning, knowing that desperate resolutions are generally only to be feared at the first; when they begin to pause, they abate, and at length vanish

of themselves. But she prevailed on Argenis to take an oath, by all the gods and goddeffes, but especially by the genius of Poliarchus, that for two whole days to come, whatsoever she might hear or see, she would offer no violence to her life. The young lady having sworn to these conditions, Seleniffa advised her to bind up her disheveled hair, and to dress herself as usual, lest any one should observe a sorrow, that it concerned her so much to conceal. Though the beauty of Argenis was great, yet the greatness of her spirit surpassed it; which now served her to smoothe her ruffled mind, at least in appearance, and to compose her countenance, which seemed nearly the same as before, only her eyes were red with weeping, which she asswaged by bathing them with cold water.

CHAP. X.

Meleander returns to Magella. His discourse with his daughter on the state of the kingdom, who suddenly swoons away in his presence.

ARGENIS had now recollected herself, and assumed a more chearful countenance, when one of her women knocked at the door, and told her the king was at the castle-gates. She presently returned into her apartment; as if she had been otherwise employed, and with a more sprightly air than common; from thence she went, attended by the guard, through the court of the palace to meet her father, who was now approaching. She kneeled and kissed his hand; he raised her up, then lightly stroking her cheek, asked after her health, observing her paleness, and telling her that the fears and dangers of the war had impaired her beauty. She answered, that when her

father was in the camp, it was her duty to follow him with tears and prayers. With that she let fall some tears, and repressed many more that were ready to burst forth. But the king bid her be of good cheer, saying, that the gods had heard her prayers, and the approaching peace should restore that beauty, which the troubles of the times had injured. The people came flocking round them, admiring the beauty and virtue of Argenis, and revering the comely grey hairs of Meleander. She also dispersed her looks, smiles, and notices, so artfully, that the people sent forth loud acclamations; and among the nobility, not one thought himself neglected or omitted by the princess. The king, surrounded with petitioners, stayed a while in the court, in which there was a fountain, no less famous for its water, than for the sculpture, which, as was said, Dæctalus carved for his host Coccalus. The water being raised to the top of the fountain, threw itself into various forms; then descending into a basin beneath, by
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the force of its fall imitated the foaming of the sea. In the midst, Galatea, as in the sea, lamenting over her Acis newly slain, who lay on the shore, and as if he were now dissolving into a river, poured forth two streams, one at his mouth, the other at his wound. On the brink of the waters the image of the furious Cyclops lay behind a rock, aiming another stone at the secure Galatea, who seemed to be uttering these verses, which the artist had engraven on the marble below,

Monster more flinty than the stone that kill'd
My Acis; than the savage beasts more wild:
A God shall plague thee, whom, unskill'd in fate,
Thou would'st not suffer in a mortal state.
Acis, a God, lives in the fountain here;
Vain is thy rage, no threats these waters fear;
His faithful heart is a clear fountain now,
Pure as my Acis, do these waters flow.
His locks as formerly still curling spring,
And make within the floating waves a ring.
How rich a blush from those blue veins is fled!
Tho' cold his blood his passion is not dead.
Yet Acis gone! his mortal beauties ever fade,
And not without a loss a Deity is made.
Ah! let his wounds mortality declare,
With speed the holy sacrifice prepare!

This object reminded Argenis of her loss, and while the king was speaking to those about him, she fed upon her solitary grief. She seemed to herself to be Galatea, lamenting a better Acis; but who was Polyphemus? Though she by that comparison pointed out Lycogenes, yet her father's fault would in spite of her endeavours intrude upon her mind. But now they entered the castle, and the nobles retiring to refresh themselves, Meleander was left alone, excepting those who belonged to his household. The king, glad of this privacy, drew Argenis aside. "Daughter, said he, thy youth and sex might excuse thee from public affairs, if both thy spirit and education had not qualified thee for great matters; and although thou art a woman, the fortune of Sicily depends on thee, and thou must learn to rule over men. Accustom thyself therefore, to those cares whilst I am living, for without them the royal dignity cannot be supported; and practise a quality most requisite in princes, learn to be secret. We are in a
bad

bad situation, my Argenis, unless we can bear our injuries, so as to appear insensible of them. If we seem to bend under the burthen that oppresses us, we may be crushed beneath its weight. Thou knowest that Lycogenes rebelled against me, and that many cities took part with his faction. But far worse than this, I find in my bosom those that watch my counsels and designs, and treat me more like a prisoner than a king. The battle I fought with Lycogenes showed him what I was able to do, and had not darkness befriended him, his intrenchments could not have withstood the valour of my soldiers. Then it was that I discovered that many of the nobility and of my council, were disaffected to me: they were urgent with me to make peace, saying, that great part of the people favoured Lycogenes, and that it was an act of parricide to drive them to desperation, and to each others destruction. They even dared to speak in favour of Lycogenes himself, saying, though he were overcome in a skirmish, the war was not

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finished,

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finished, and that if he were conquered it was not expedient to ruin him utterly, for with what an eye would the Sicilians look upon him, who had robbed them of their favourite? That therefore I ought to seize the opportunity while I was master of the field, and while the people would receive the peace as a benefit from me. I will not dissemble, my daughter, I was much more affrighted at these speeches, than when Lycogenes's banners were displayed in the field. I found my dignity betrayed, and feared a greater mischief, if I refused to be deceived by them. Thou, my daughter, wert the cause that I desired to hold my crown upon any conditions, rather than by an obstinate defence of my prerogatives, to hazard thy being deprived of thy right. Neither would the rebels accept of conditions from me their king and conqueror, but brought me articles from Lycogenes to this effect.

“ King Meleander shall enjoy the crown of Sicily : Lycogenes shall hold the same place in his favour as before these troubles ;
he

he shall be admiral and governor of Syracuse; and the country belonging to it; and he shall keep Erbeffus and Heraclea, with garrisons for his security; besides, they put in a clause, that all injuries should be forgotten, and no man called to account for any thing done, during the troubles."

"It stood not with my honour, my Argenis, to receive these conditions of peace, nor with my fortunes to refuse them. I was in doubt which course to take, when Ibburanes and Dimalbius did me worthy service, that I might not appear to prejudice the royal dignity. They went between us, sometimes to me, sometimes to Lycogenes, seeming to compel both sides to do what they most desired. So I agreed to the conditions, but with this limitation, that the garrisons in Erbeffus and Heraclea should be no more than two bands; lest, under colour of garrisons, he should keep whole legions there, ready at any time to serve against me; and partly also, lest my lenity should

be suspected in yielding to all the desires of my enemies. I commanded the ambassadors to signify this to Lycogenes, and if he approved the condition to return to us the following day : they did so, but unfortunately in the way they met with Poliarchus." Argenis trembled at this circumstance, and to conceal her emotion, fell into a violent fit of coughing, that her change of countenance might be imputed to that disorder. Meleander (pausing till she had recovered herself) thus proceeded, "By most unhappy fate, Poliarchus met with these ambassadors, whether by chance, or on purpose I know not, but he spared them not : three out of five of them he slew ; the two survivors came to me hot with their flight and rage : they filled my court with their complaints, and lamented the fate of their companions, calling my faith in question. I summoned the nobles together, and found them mostly inclined to throw the blame on me ; and the people joined in the clamour, calling out that Poliarchus must be

be punished, or else it would be thought that I sent him to assault those who came depending on my faith ; and that nothing less than his head could atone for his offence. These things they urged more like commanders than counsellors. But the merits of Poliarchus pleaded so strongly for him, and his approved virtue would not allow of the suspicion of so mean an action, that Cleobulus, Eurimedes, and many other faithful friends, thought this act incredible. They were of opinion, that he should be heard, and that he would clear himself from this charge. I therefore promised that I would send for him, to plead his own cause ; for it would be without example, that a man should be condemned, without being allowed to defend himself.

“ His enemies hearing this were still more enraged ; they exclaimed, that justice was deferred only in order to give Poliarchus time to escape ; that unless he were prevented, he would leave the land, and boast in his own country, that he had insulted Sicily, and escaped without punishment. When
they

they thus persecuted me with their incessant importunities, I demanded what they required of me. That Poliarchus was absent, and it was in vain to give sentence against a man out of my power. They then as with one voice, cried out that his flight should be prevented, by ordering the beacons to be fired, and the ports being shut up, he would soon be taken, and made an example to all strangers, that where crimes are committed, they may also be punished. I thought it expedient to give way to them for Poliarchus's safety, lest, by refusing to proceed against him, I should incense them to be the ministers of their own vengeance : whereas if he came safely to his trial, many things might happen to deliver him from their rage and cruelty. In the beginning of the night, the beacons were accordingly lighted, and it was a great comfort to me to observe the share the soldiers took in the danger of Poliarchus : but now, whilst I hoped for better things, Timonides came the author of ill-tidings, and told me that Poliarchus was dead."

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Here Argenis could no longer command her grief, but was quite overcome; she fetched a deep sigh, sunk on her knees, and like one expiring fell back on the ground. Meleander cried out, and the attendants running in, she was supported by her women, and laid upon a bed. The king then enquired of Selenissa what kind of malady this was, and whether his daughter were subject to it. Selenissa dissembling the cause, told him that she had scarce eaten any thing for several days past, and that she feared she was troubled with a slow fever; but that this fainting would soon be over, and that no ill consequences need be apprehended.

While the women were employed in recovering the princess, letters were brought from Lycogenes to the king, signifying, that he would soon be there, that the peace might be sworn and ratified in the temple of Pallas, which the king held in great veneration. The king returned for answer, that it pleased him exceeding well, and that he would expect him on the morrow.

morrow. The messenger being dismissed, he called for Eurimedes, a man both valiant and fortunate; for whilst a youth he had been crowned both at the Isthmian and Olympic games, to the honour of his country. He was highly esteemed by the king, and captain of his guard; he was always governor of that city or castle where the king resided, and had distinguished himself by his unshaken fidelity in the late war. To him the king gave such orders as he thought expedient; that the watch should be carefully kept, and the guard doubled that night; composed of such bands as were most faithful and trusty; and to be careful lest Lycogenes's coming should cause any disturbance; for that it appeared his coming so boldly was not so much in confidence of the peace, as of the strength of his faction.

These orders being given, he went to supper in the apartment of Argenis (she being now somewhat better) there to relax his mind, oppressed with public and private cares. The rest of the night he
gave

gave to sleep, so far as his cares permitted him. In the mean time grief suggested many cruel purposes in the heart of Argenis, neither was that night pleasing or secure to Poliarchus, Timoclea's house being troubled with fresh disturbances.

CHAP. XI.

Gelanorus returns to Timoclea's house, reporting his master's death, whom Arfidas visits, and advises to leave Sicily.

WHEN Gelanorus parted from Arfidas, he went the shortest way to Timoclea's house, and there to the servants artfully lamented the death of his master. The lady seconding his intention, asked him before her people the particular circumstances of the death of Poliarchus. Archombrotus came in at that instant, and assumed the voice and countenance of grief. While this scene was acting, Arfidas arrived. When the lady, being told of his approach, met him at the gate, he apologised for presuming, upon their former acquaintance, to come uninvited to her house. Timoclea told him, he had done her much honour, and thanked him for the visit. They entered the house together, and coming
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to Archombrotus, Arfidas saluted him first as a stranger. It was about dinner-time, which the Sicilians observed with more delicacy than any other Greeks. The repast being ended, the servants retired. Timoclea first spoke, saying, "I know, Arfidas, that you are come hither to do a pious office, and, though under the influence of an adverse fortune, that you still love and seek your Poliarchus. He is concealed with me, as I suppose Gelanorus has informed you. I will not now enquire from whence this mischief proceeds; for I shall understand it from you in his presence." On this Arfidas said, "May the gods prosper us in this concealment! Concerning the secret that we preserve, no future age shall be silent of. But, lady, the fortune of thy house is uncertain: if it shall keep its trust in safety, and at a proper time restore this pledge of virtue to the world, it shall be held in such regard by posterity, as Italy for the preservation of Saturn; but if under your roof Poliarchus should find a grave,

grave, it will then be held polluted, and all the dire monsters spoken of in Sicily, will be thought to have their abode in this place."

Timoclea, replying nothing to this, lighted a torch, and led the way into the cave to Poliarchus. They were not long there before they saw him rising from his couch, being alarmed by the light. When he perceived Arfidas, just saluting the others, he leaped into his arms, and praised his fidelity, asking him if he would acknowledge this Poliarchus, a man proscribed in Sicily, and obliged to hide his head: then turning to Timoclea, "See you this lady, Arfidas? If I be guilty, she cannot hope for pardon; but if by this concealment my life is preserved, I owe it to her: she has compelled me in this storm of fortune to shelter myself with her. But tell me, Arfidas, by what offence am I become detested in Sicily. Is the king from a Meleander become a Busiris? or are the Sicilians worshippers of Diana Taurica, and will they sprinkle her altar with

with the blood of their guests?" Arfidas, lamenting the fortune of Meleander, told him what a tumult and almost sedition was raised in the camp by the messengers from Lycogenes, together with the behaviour of the faithless nobles; adding, that the king, overcome by their importunities, and fearing an insurrection, had consented to have the beacons fired, hoping that in the mean time Poliarchus might escape. He heard Arfidas with some impatience, often changing his place, and attempting to speak; and when he had done, taking Timoclea by the hand, "I call thee to witness, lady, (for though the gods are always present, they do not at all times punish the wicked, nor justify the virtuous) I call thee to witness, Timoclea, who wast present at the action: thou sawest me fight: Did I lie in wait for these men? Did I seek a quarrel? Did I provoke them to be my enemies? They set upon me unawares, and I must either have fallen under their hands, or if I overcame them all Sicily must be up
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in arms against me. What proof is there of any mischief premeditated by me against them? I was accompanied only by this lady, a poor assistant in an engagement. Her servants and mine were gone forward in the wood, so far that they heard not the noise of our encounter. But to what a state hath fortune driven this unhappy king! He respects the messengers from traitors and rebels as lawful ambassadors; with his friend's blood he would satisfy his enemies demands, and prefers their satisfaction to his own honour and justice."

Poliarchus was about to speak still more freely, as his grief and integrity moved him; but Arfidas interrupting, told him, he ought not to call in question the justice of the public in his case; for that all men, excepting the faction of Lyco-genes, admired his valour, since being alone, and prepared for a journey rather than a fight, he should come off a conqueror from the attack of five men; that the soldiers laughed at the survivors
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for basely complaining, that five men were attacked by one. “Indeed, (added this faithful friend) we are the persons who have cause to complain, that, as things now stand, Sicily is unworthy of thy virtue. Leave it, therefore, for a time, and lay the king under this obligation, that he be not compelled to protect thee with danger to himself, nor dishonourably to give thee up into the hands of thine enemies. If thou consider his situation, his offence may be excused; for ancient custom is here so strong, that slaughter must either be punished or justified before the judges; insomuch that Mars himself, as they say, for killing Halirrhothius, was obliged to appear before the Areopagus. Depart then, Poliarchus, and suffer not this island to be totally wicked.” Poliarchus answered, that he would be gone, since this ungrateful country repaid his services by obliging him to leave it privately.

CHAP. XI.

A pleasant story of a thief. Timoclea gives Poliarchus a disguise, who entreats Arsidas to assure the princess of his health and safety.

THEY then consulted together on the safest method for Poliarchus's escape out of Sicily. Arsidas had married a wife from among the Brutians, and he proposed to send him from Messina to his father-in-law, disguised like a peasant, and also in his own ship would convey him to Italy. Timoclea smiling, said she would furnish him with a disguise that should baffle his pursuers. "In the district of Panormus (said she) there was a thief, who by a subtle contrivance, escaped punishment for a long time; for, according to the fabulous account of Geryon, he had three different faces. He was a middle-aged man, his hair and beard brown and thin; but in his pockets

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he had two false heads of hair with beards to them, one long and white, like an old man's, the other black and short, like a youth's. Thus, if he had robbed like a young man, he would meet his pursuers as an old one; and again, if the grey beard had committed any roguery, he would put on the young man's, and escape. By this delusion, he even escaped suspicion as well as punishment. My father was then governor of Panormus, and by his vigilance this camelion was detected and put to death; but, admiring the cunning of the man, he commanded the fictitious hair and beards to be preserved in his house. I will fetch them, and we will try them upon Poliarchus." Having thus said, she went out of the cave, and presently returned with these two artful disguises of youth and age. They put one of them upon Poliarchus (who however inly grieved at being thus obliged to use the contrivance of a villain for his security) when he appeared so transformed, that even Argenis could not have known him.

Now, wishing good success to this deception, they earnestly entreat him to continue wearing it, and Timoclea promised to bring him a dress suitable to it; for it concerned Poliarchus to be disguised, though in a cave, that if curiosity should bring any person thither, he, trusting in his dress, might escape into the fields. As they were taking leave, Poliarchus called Arfidas aside, excusing himself to Archombrotus and the lady, for speaking a word in private to him. Arfidas was the only friend, who knew the secret love between him and Argenis: he therefore entreated him not to delay going to that princess, being much more grieved for her sake than for his own: he feared greatly the effect that the report of his death might have upon her, knowing that she would not willingly survive him. He therefore enjoined Arfidas to hasten to comfort her, lest she should lament while he was in peace and safety, saying, if the gods granted him a free passage out of Sicily, he would attend

her commands upon the coast of Italy, or if it was her pleasure to see him first, he would hazard a visit through every danger.

Time would not allow him to say any more, neither would he commit any more in charge to his friend, who promised his assistance to the utmost. And Timoclea persuading, and Poliarchus not forbidding, he consented to defer his journey till the next morning. They promised to return after supper with the dress for Poliarchus: he in the mean time eat sparingly of such things as the lady had brought him, while Arfidas jested with him to divert his thoughts from his troubles. “Why, noble sir, said he, should you be grieved, that a cave or a disguise should conceal you from your enemies? You being alone fly from a multitude; but when Typhoeus only pursued all the gods, they were not ashamed to fly and hide themselves in Egypt under the shapes of various birds and beasts. Your familiar friend, Nicopompus, has made bold to

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represent

represent them with the bills of birds and faces of beasts upon their divine countenances." With that he delivered him a book of poems, and desired him to divert himself with them; and then they all left Poliarchus, and retired to the house.

C H A P. XIII.

A conversation between Archombrotus and Arfidas, concerning the abilities of men. That persons of first-rate talents are rarely found, and of the different degrees of genius among men. The character of Ibburanes.

IN the mean time, Archombrotus and Arfidas walked in the garden, and the evening being pleasant passed some time there conversing on various subjects. From commending Poliarchus, they took occasion to speak of such men as excelled in genius, virtue and spirit, what rare ornaments of society they are, and yet how frequently overlooked, or despised by such minds as are made for subjection, and yet assume the command over people of free and generous spirits. While they were thus discoursing, the love of virtue, and dislike of the present state, so transported Arfidas, that he affirmed with some warmth, that such excellent men

could not be neglected without injustice, and even danger, and that it was the most mischievous cruelty, to neglect that merit which ought to be distinguished and rewarded in the sight of the world. "Fortune of late, said he, hath taken a most absurd course; for it is almost taken for a proof of superior worth to be driven from a court, or else slighted and neglected there. The cowardly and barbarous vices of the great seek to disarm Virtue, as if they thought to raise themselves, by proudly affecting to trample her under their feet."

Archombrotus, whether desirous to draw more instruction from Arsidas, or aiming to take the part of kings, replied, that in Poliarchus's case, he detested the injustice of fortune; but in general it was no wonder, that kings should overlook superior talents or merits, being engaged in so many cares, and burthened with so many expences, that it would not benefit the public, if such men were to become burthensome to the rest, and the
best.

best gifts of nature were to be paid for out of the public treasury. “ Besides (continued he) it frequently happens that those accomplishments we so much admire, are of no use to kings, nor any way profitable in state employments; as some fruits are pleasant to the eye, and yet neither wholesome nor agreeable to the taste!”

Artidas at first smiled rather disdainfully, seeming to reject his defence of such an unjust destination, till perceiving, by the modest countenance of Archombrotus, that he was not unwilling to be confuted, and that he expected his answer, at length he spoke thus: “ Why do you object the cares of kings to my argument? As if it ought not to be one of their principal cares, to distinguish such men, and to draw them about them. They are not so common that they need fear the number, insomuch that I can hardly condemn him, that sought for one of them with a torch in open daylight. But you fear the state will be over-charged with

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them. Oh careful and wise œconomy! Are not princes solicitous to have a fine stable of horses! To have fine hawks and hounds, and all those things, which are more for pleasure than use, they think it a disgrace to princes to omit. They think nothing of the money that is squandered this way, nor of the worthless men who are maintained out of it; but to provide for excellent persons they think a great burthen: here they study parsimony, here the exchequer fails. No, Archombrotus, it is their virtue that fails on these occasions. Suppose the king does not delight in the company of such men. Do we only lay up among our treasures such things as we naturally fancy? Do not the wise collect also such things as deserve to be esteemed for their own intrinsic value? Neither are kings so restrained, but that, if they dislike or stand in fear of such men, they may lay them up as a store in some other place out of their sight; nor need you, as I said, to complain of the number of
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of these men, since, chuse never so carefully you will find but a few of them."

"But whom then, said Archombrotus, will you place in this rank?" Arsidas replied, "If we leave particulars and consider this matter at large, I would exclude none of the nobler arts and sciences: one man is famous in managing horses, another for the use of weapons; some excel in painting, others in music, in mechanics, or in architecture, in aqueducts, or in other curious arts; such I mean as are valuable in themselves, or in high esteem by the fashion of the times. Let such men be paid according to their own estimation, if they cannot be had at a cheaper rate: the bounty of their pay will commend the artists, and be the glory of their prince besides: but observe, that I would have all these men most excellent in their way, and such as there are but few of to be found. As for those of a still higher sort, whose abilities respect the arts of war and peace, and men eminent for valour or for learning, surely

we ought to set a still higher value upon them; nay we ought not to delay the acquisition of them at any rate. Yet I would not thus honour either mere rashness in arms, nor the common-place knowledge of scholars; but such heroes as have their ardour tempered by knowledge and conduct, and are favoured by fortune, especially those whom fame hath recorded, which often inspires low minds with courage, and gives success in warlike undertakings: and among the learned, those of capital merit, who are so eminent and so few, that their number at a time is often less than that of the muses, and their lustre so great, that none are ignorant of it but those who are wilfully blind. Some of these, whom I have enumerated, are fit to manage public affairs; but, because the state knows not how to make use of these blessings of the gods, they often grow rusty in discontent and obscurity, instead of being polished by use and employment. For the rest, that seem born only for their books, yet how great is
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their power with the present age and with posterity, when according to their favour or pleasure they bestow fame and immortality even upon princes and heroes. This power, he that chuses to be ignorant of, deserves to feel all the inconvenience by his own experience. We are so disposed by nature, Archombrotus, that every man delights in something; those that excel in that study or art we are fond of, we most admire. Suppose, therefore, that the most excellent men in arts and arms, and in all sciences and mechanic arts, were all assembled together, like the stars in the sky, in one empire, and under one prince, would not the fame of that court reach to all parts of the world? Who would be ignorant of it? Nay, who would not respect the temple, in which his favourite deity was placed? And, as to the prince himself, how largely would he be repayed for his labour and expence in collecting them? He would exceed the common happiness of mortality; for he would see himself deified while alive

much more effectually, than by a cloud of perfumes, and the phantom of an eagle's escaping from his funeral pile after his death. He would triumph in the universal applause; these men would be his pageants, these his best spoils of all nations, from whom he had gathered such flowers, which must form for him a wreath of immortality."

"But these things, said Archombrotus, are rather to be wished than expected; the variety of employments and dispositions in those belonging to courts, forbid us to expect them: besides, such excellent men as you describe are not always to be purchased; though I believe there are *some* such in courts, and in the favour of kings, and those who are not so happy ought rather to complain of fortune than of princes."

"I never believed, returned Arfidas, that this scheme could absolutely be brought to effect; but as knowledge is profitable, though it be not strictly reducible to practice, so in this case it would be right

to consider it as practicable, that we may as much as fortune, and the state of our affairs will permit, promote all opportunities of drawing by the hope of reward, if not all, yet as many eminent men as we possibly can to the court. And whereas you say, that kings courts are not wholly destitute of such men as these, I do not wholly contradict you here; but mark, Archombrotus, there is a middle rank of men, like that of knights among nobility, greatly inferior to those we have been speaking of; men of moderate parts and abilities, yet capable of employment and useful in affairs: of these there are *many* in courts, and when they are promoted to dignities, they shine with the borrowed rays of preferment, so that men think them the most perfect works of nature, as inferior gems receive additional lustre from the manner of their setting. To be diligent and prudent, to speak nothing rashly, to put on the appearance of wisdom, and by that means to hide their own defects: these things may be practised by a man of very
moderate

moderate genius, and these are all that we can find in many great men who yet are highly extolled; but the absence of vice is mistaken for virtue, and a privation of folly for wisdom; thus a small rivulet passes for the ocean. Custom and use make them able and ready in business, and this by the many is taken for the gift of nature and greatness of capacity. I do not grudge these men their due praises. It may be no trifle for a man to be raised to honour, and to improve by his employment; but these, Archombrotus, are not the men I am speaking of. Besides these I allow there are some few superior spirits to be found in courts, and kings favour: for Poliarchus once lived in a court, and was respected there; and also yourself, noble youth, I will not doubt to reckon among these ornaments of nature. Meleander has Cleobulus and Eurimides, than whom what worthier men can be found? But I do not therefore reckon the courts of kings just or happy, because out of a scanty number of excellent men they sometimes

sometimes entertain a very few ; for I could easily name many more, who are despised, or what is worse, insulted. Sometimes the fault is in kings, who fear virtue and hate admonition ; sometimes in those about them, if nature has made them savage, happiness, indolent, or fortune, proud : besides many great persons think it their own loss, if any man besides themselves and their followers are enriched by the court ; so merit being neglected, they distribute the favours of the prince (who perhaps is ignorant of it) among their own friends and followers. Far otherwise would they act, if they loved their master sincerely, or themselves wisely ; for what could be so glorious to them as to gain at the state's expence, men born for the ornaments of the age to be their followers, who would doubt whether they owed more to the king, than to them by whom they were recommended to his notice. Above all, I cannot but laugh at their blindness, who neglect the praise of the learned, which will outlive their wealth or pleasures, and

and which will attend only those who truly seek it. But if the honey of these bees please you not, at least it is wise to avoid their stings. How often hath *one* man, either a soldier or scholar, revenged his private injuries upon the whole state? How often hath *one* headed a party, *one* gained a victory? Such men are not provoked with impunity. The gods grant that Sicily feel not the revenge of Poliarclus. He came voluntarily into the king's service, so that the offence is the heavier, in that we fought not such exalted merit, nor could entertain virtue when we had it. Truly, I know not how Meleander will excuse himself to the best of his nobles, and especially to Ibburanes, who they say comes to him this day; for he will boldly lay this error to the king's charge, being a stranger, and privileged both by his high quality and his familiarity with the king."

Though Archombrotus could not disapprove of this discourse, yet he was sorry that Arsidas dwelt so long on this subject;
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for he rather desired to hear of the laws and customs of the Sicilians, their manner of living, and the chief exercises of the court, with the names of such as were most eminent either for merit or the contrary. When therefore Arfidas named Ibburanes, he took occasion to enquire who he was, and by what virtues he was rendered so respectable. "He was born in Lydia, said Arfidas, and only connected with us by a friendship, which the courtesy of Meleander hath cemented. He is descended from the ancient nobility of Lydia, and being early initiated into state affairs, he stored his active mind with useful knowledge; and, being possessed of a fortune equal to any dignity, he chose very young to perform those offices that belong to the service of the gods. Yet was it later than his friends expected before he obtained the scarlet robe; but it was his glory to deserve the dignity long before he gained it. Since that he has executed high offices of judicature, embassies, and governments of provinces,

provinces, purchasing every where an honourable name for justice and clemency.

He is the favourite of the muses; he admits them to his counsels, and with a most delightful wit he recites their inspirations. To him therefore, as a second Phœbus, do such resort, whom poetry hath exalted above the vulgar; and, lest the gods should seem to deny him any thing, they have united his family in the strictest harmony and religion; so that, after his example, his whole family resemble an assembly of the gods. Indeed, it was not without a presage his ancestors gave bees for their device, from whence, as the times and occasions require, proceed both honey and stings. For these three days past this Ibburanes has been employed in negotiating the peace with Lycogenes, which being now concluded, he is this day expected by the king."

CHAP. XIV.

A company of rustics break into Timoclea's house. An account of the occasion of the tumult. They apprehend Archombrotus instead of Poliarchus.

THE pleasure of conversation beguiled the time till supper was ready. The lady's servants brought in the repast, and Timoclea called for her guests; and now beginning to lay aside their cares, relying upon their scheme for Poliarchus's safe departure, the bowl was circulating among them, when a company of clowns with a dangerous rudeness thundered at the gates. The porter intreated these furious rustics to let him tell his lady who they were that demanded entrance; but they with stubborn pride insisted on immediate admission, saying they came with authority; and pressing furiously upon the door, they broke it down and rushed in; yet they had only such weapons as chance or their occupation

occupation afforded, and none of them were compleatly armed. When they entered the apartment where the guests were sitting, Timoclea fainted away, but Archombrotus and Arsidas leaping from their seats drew their swords, resolving to sell their lives at as dear a rate as possible.

The cause of this tumult was this. A woman of the next town having seen Gelanorus, and enquiring who he was, she was told he was the servant of Poliarchus. As it was a festival sacred to Ceres, many peasants from the neighbouring villages were assembled together in the town of Pthinthia. This woman falling into company with some of them, had rashly told them where she had seen Poliarchus's servant; on which one of them started up, "And what, said he, if Poliarchus be privately hidden there?" Another fit for such headlong counsel, added, that so serious a business was not to be neglected; that the whole town would be punished, if Poliarchus were concealed within the limits
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of it. And now the same opinion possessing many of them, and the report gaining strength, they soon agreed, not as to a thing doubtful and questionable, but affirmed as a certainty, that Timoclea harboured Poliarchus. That they were all fables that had been told them of his death, and resolved that he should be seized and brought to his trial. If the gods had not preserved him, the conjectures of these madmen had been verified; so often does it happen, that chance and rashness discover more than doubtful and diligent wisdom could do, upon the best and surest grounds.

The multitude now filled the marketplace with noise and tumult, ready to follow any one as their leader; and when one cried out they must not delay, they all ran together, and breaking open Timoclea's house, as we have seen, believed they had lighted upon Poliarchus; indeed none of them knew him, but they had heard him described, as a young man of good stature and pleasing countenance, which things

things were visible in Archombrotus ; and his foreign dress confirmed their opinions. Assured by these tokens they shouted for joy, and if they had not been desirous of taking him alive, he was likely to have paid the debt of another man. But when they perceived him to stand on his defence, he whom the mob had chosen for their captain spoke thus, " Now, Poliarchus, thou art twice a traitor ! First, in having deserved the king's displeasure, and secondly, in drawing thy sword against us who execute his orders. Lay down thy weapon instantly, and yield thyself our prisoner ! Timoclea shall suffer the same punishment for concealing thee."

The first having thus spoken, the rest raised their voices and bid him make haste. He had no time to express his wonder, nor to ask what was his fault ; but only warmed with youthful courage, he resolved to resist them till death. But Arsidas being born in Sicily, and understanding their provincial language, strongly withheld him. " Hold, hold thy hand, Archombrotus !

brother ! (said he) do not spend thy valour upon such as these. Shall they be thy conquerors who are not worthy to be vanquished by thee? These menaces are not intended for thee, it is Poliarchus whom they seek." Then turning to him who led the rabble, he told him that nothing could be done well in a tumult; and asked why they should be angry before they knew themselves despised or the king wronged. He then with many fair words told this rustick, that he did not doubt that a word from him would restrain their fury, and if he would command them to be quiet, they would all obey him. The clown's pride being flattered with the unexpected honours paid him, more like a cryer than a captain commanded silence among them.

The noise being turned to a low murmur, Arfidas demanded what had brought together so many people in arms? The ring-leader answered, They came thither to apprehend Poliarchus. Then Arfidas swore solemnly that Poliarchus was not there, nor did he, for aught that he knew,
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enjoy the light! That they should quiet their minds, which were bent to do the king service, but indeed with a rash and blind devotion. He then asked if any man present knew Poliarchus? The form and features of this young man, said he, are quite different from his. Here even the most modest of the clowns set up a hiss, but the rest broke out into rage and fury; crying out, "Carry away the king's enemy." Arsidas made signs that he begged to be heard again; and with some difficulty they were once again hushed. "Take heed, said he, still addressing himself to the leader, that you be not held the author of this tumult! It is not lawful to use violence to a stranger; but if you be resolved to shew your loyalty by wronging an innocent man, he shall yield himself into your custody, upon condition that you shall neither bind nor fetter him, and when it is day-light, shall carry him to court. There let those judge his cause who have proper authority, and let him be punished if he have deserved it; and

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let Timoclea remain here with a guard to prevent her escaping, till it be known whether she is guilty or not. In the mean time, thou that hast the power keep thy townsmen from doing farther violence in this house; and thus wilt thou show at once thy wisdom and loyalty." But while they were debating upon this matter, Archombrotus refused to yield himself to them. "What (said he) shall I put myself into the power of an enraged rabble? Who would trust the violence of the multitude, who may insult and injure any man without controul?" But Timoclea falling on her knees, with her tears and prayers made his high spirit relent; whilst Aridas, with strong reasons, urged that there could be no other means of safety, than to suffer himself to be carried to the king; for, why should he desire to die, and what comfort could there be in his end if he should perish by so disorderly a rabble? These things being debated on both sides, the violence of the storm began to abate. Archombrotus yielded to the

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persuasions of Arfidas and Timoclea, and the peasants were appeased when they found themselves conquerors. Timoclea promoted this agreement with effectual arguments, for she commanded several vessels of old wine to be brought forth, entertaining the clowns also with her provision of olives. Afterwards they divided themselves into several stations, setting a watch. Eight of them lay upon straw in Archombrotus's chamber, and as many more at the door of Timoclea's apartment. The rest were dispersed in all the rooms and at the gate, except when their drunken heads were overcome with sleep; at which time they were in the power of their prisoners, if they desired either to escape, or to secure them; but if Archombrotus had fled, Timoclea must have been answerable; for all would certainly have believed it was Poliarchus who had so escaped.

C H A P. XV.

Arfidas visits Poliarchus and carries him a disguise. Argenis receives the news of his safety. Archombrotus is brought before the king.

ARSIDAS was not watched by these officious friends of the state, because they knew him to be neither Poliarchus nor the master of the house. Therefore after having imparted his design to Timoclea, he retired to rest in that chamber, within which was the closet, where was the passage into the cave; and making fast the chamber door, he descended the stairs, carrying with him the clothes which the lady had provided to disguise Poliarchus; who, when he saw Arfidas alone, he began to enquire (not without a presage of some mischief) why Archombrotus and Timoclea came not with him?—His friend related the story of the clowns outrages and of the danger of Archombrotus, at which re-

port he trembled till he heard that young man was in safety. Then putting on the clothes which Timoclea had sent him, he desired Arfidas, as soon as day-light appeared, to go to Argenis, and to return to the cave with the same speed and diligence, and bring him her commands.

When they had spent great part of the night in conversation, Arfidas returned into his chamber, hoping to take a little rest; but the snoring and noises of those drunken peasants so disturbed him, that laying aside all thoughts of sleep, he cursed those ridiculous soldiers, and came out of his room. Then calling up some of the principal ones, he told them he was going to the court, whither as soon as they pleased they might follow with their prisoner.

It was about twelve miles from Timoclea's house to Magella, which having ridden speedily, he entered the palace when scarce any of Argenis's attendants were stirring. That princess had passed the night in great agitation, and Selenissa in extreme fear, remembering her passion the preced-

ing day, and still dreading the effects of her grief. She started at every motion of her lady, enquiring after her health, and often rising to observe her condition. She was thus employed when Arfidas called up the guard, and desired to be admitted to Seleniffa. These told the women servants, and one of whom that was allowed to do it, opened Argenis's chamber door where Seleniffa lay, and told her that Arfidas was there, and desired to speak with her.—The time of day, and the friendship which she knew subsisted between Arfidas and Poliarchus, easily persuaded her that he brought news concerning the business that had caused them so much trouble; but if he brought bad tidings, she thought Argenis must by no means hear them. She therefore bade the maiden to shew Arfidas into the next room, and throwing a night-gown over her, she went thither immediately: as soon as they were alone, she began thus, “I know, Arfidas, you come to bring news of Poliarchus, speak then, shall we live, or must we die with him?”—Ar-

Arfidas would not keep her any longer in suspense, but replied, "Poliarchus lives! he is in health and safety, and I come a messenger from him to Argenis." Selenissa, overjoyed at these words, takes Arfidas by the hand, and leads him into the bed-chamber of Argenis; and as he kneeled down by her bed-side, Selenissa's joy not suffering her to use any ceremony or circumstance, "Madam, said she, Poliarchus lives! Arfidas assures us of his health and safety." Argenis, who was drowned in tears, and lay almost in a lifeless condition when Selenissa came to her; being now struck with unexpected joy, she was at first more disturbed than before with her grief; but when she recovered her breath and spirits, she sat up in her bed and desired Arfidas to tell her the particulars of his friend's concealment and escape; and she was in such a suspense, that being still fearful, she obliged Arfidas to confirm with an oath the truth of what he had related.

He then, to put all beyond a doubt, assured her that if she pleased, Poliarchus himself

himself would wait upon her; adding, that he had disguised himself with false hair and beard, and was dressed in the habit of a mean peasant. He told her also of the tumult of the clowns who interrupted their repast the evening before, how they were enraged, and how pacified. And that they were bringing a prisoner to court, a noble youth, who entirely loved and was beloved by Poliarchus, instead of Poliarchus himself, whom yet they thought they had apprehended: afterwards she desired Arsidas to go to the king, and inform him of the intention and coming of these men, lest they should offer any injury or indignity to Archombrotus, and then to return to her again; while in the mean time she considered where Poliarchus should go, and what was best for him to do.

Scarcely was Arsidas dismissed from Argenis's apartment, when those rude officious rustics entered the city with Archombrotus prisoner; and when the guard demanded what they would have, they answered they had apprehended Poliarchus,

and were bringing him to the king. Being received into the city, they came to the castle ; where the gates being shut, Eurimides enquired what they were, and whom they brought ? They answered in the same manner, that they came to deliver up Poliarchus to the king. Eurimides was glad to hear that Poliarchus was alive, and grieved to think of his danger ; he, however, desired them to shew him the prisoner, at which they all pointed to Archombrotus. The governor viewing the stranger, told them that was not the man they spoke of, and suspecting some ill design, commanded them instantly to surrender their arms ; for he feared this might be some mischief of Lycogenes's contrivance. Then looking earnestly upon Archombrotus, "What fable, said he, is this ? and why dost thou, young man, feign thyself to be Poliarchus ?" To which he replied, that he never took that name upon him, nor came thither of his own accord, therefore the error of those clowns was not to be imputed to him as a fault.

While

While they were speaking, Arctidas came, and by command from Meleander brought them all into the court of the palace. There Cleobulus, president of the council, told them in the king's name, (who now understood their mistake) that the king would always remember their faith and loyalty to him at this time; exhorting them at all times to keep hearts and hands ready for his service, which owed no superior duties but to the gods and to the king. Then, as he was commanded, he brought Archombrotus into the king's presence, who after he had made due obeysance thus spake, "Let it not seem an ill omen, oh king! that as a guilty man I am first presented to you. The very height of my wishes was to come to your court, and to offer my services to you. For this purpose I left my native country to seek Sicily, as the happiest of all lands in having you for its monarch: and though I did not wish to be brought to you by such conductors, I cannot believe these things have happened without the appointment of the gods. As

far as I can understand, oh king! no man was a truer servant than Poliarchus, none more faithful in counsel, none more valiant in the field; why then should I not glory in being thought worthy to be brought in his place? But though I may fall short of him in worth, I will contend with him in zeal for your service. Let me not be thought presumptuous in defending Poliarchus? I know that he is accused, but not yet condemned, therefore it is lawful for me to commend him and protect his fame. In the mean time, if it shall please you to make use of this hand, you shall find that my life is not dearer to me than your commands."

While Archombrotus was thus speaking, Meleander fixed his eyes upon him stedfastly. His youth and beauty, the fire of his eyes, his behaviour neither bashful nor presuming, all recommended him strongly. When he had ended his speech, the king courteously thanked him for choosing his court to reside in, assuring him that he had found by experience that

none

none were more faithful, than those who brought to Sicily that virtue which was not born there, and therefore owed nothing to the soil or state: and so saying, the king gave his right hand to the young man, who respectfully kissed it. Meleander then raised and embraced him, and already seemed to promise himself great things from him.

When he was questioned of his country and parentage, he only answered briefly that he was born in Africa; and though Meleander's desire to be informed of farther particulars grew stronger, yet could they get nothing more from him; but being asked more peremptorily how he came so well acquainted with Poliarchus, and whether he were his kinsman, countryman, or friend, he frankly told them the whole story, excepting what related to his concealment by Timoclea.

C H A P. XVI.

Observations on the fashions of different nations. Court rumours of the apprehension of Poliarchus. The strong resolution of Argenis. Heraleon is taken for Poliarchus.

ARCHOMBROTUS however freely related to them the story of the clowns impertinence; and while they were smiling at the mistake, Meleander said that besides the age and countenance of Archombrotus, his foreign dress had contributed to strengthen their error; those ignorant people supposing, that because Poliarchus was a stranger, he must needs wear a foreign habit. “But, said Archombrotus, I will no more be punished for the faults of my country fashions, for I will wear a cloak, and accustom myself to the fashion of that country, to whose service I have given myself up to be instructed and improved.” “Nay (said the king) stay till you are better acquainted with our customs, and till
your

your eye is familiarised to our dress: at present these must seem strange to you, and you prefer your own habit, the remembrance of your country being strongly impressed upon your mind; but after you have worn our habit for a time, you will perhaps much dislike your own. I remember, when a young man, I went into Africa, I laughed at their dress so different from ours, but when custom had reconciled them to me, and I returned again to Sicily, I disdained my own country fashions for some time afterwards. So that nothing is more unjust than to condemn those things that we do not ourselves practise, or have not seen; especially when whole nations agree in them; for when by time we are brought to approve them, it appears that our ignorance only made us dislike them. Besides, it is agreeable to reason, to believe that every people under heaven should have their habits and their manners suited to their country: which the genius of the country will infuse into thee, if thou stay long enough to understand it. Let nothing therefore, but virtue and vice strongly move

move thee, either at home or in a foreign land; but I would have every thing here, my gentle guest, regulated according to thy own liking, and the customs of thy country."

While Meleander, with an old man's ambition, thus played the philosopher, Arfidas slipped away to Argenis, and commended Archombrotus; because, at his first appearance before the king, he made honourable mention of Poliarchus. But while the princess and Seleniffa greedily listened to this account of the stranger's fortitude and generosity, a sudden report was spread in the palace, that Poliarchus was now really taken, and that they were conducting him to the king. Argenis was not alarmed, believing they spoke ignorantly of Archombrotus; but one of the maidens assured her, every body knew that that young stranger, brought by the peasants, was not Poliarchus; but that it was reported for certain, that Poliarchus himself was since apprehended by other peasants, being

being taken in a strange disguise out of a cave, where he had hid himself, and that some were sent before to certify the truth of their approach. Argenis stood astonished at this as at a thunder-clap, yet scarcely more than Selenissa and Arsidas. But the latter whispered in the ear of the princess, "The malice of Fortune is beyond all our contrivances: we are undone, lady, unless you have the courage openly to defend Poliarchus from his enemies. Since I hear of the cave, and the disguise mentioned, I have no doubt but the report is too true."

Then she, assuming courage in this new emergency, replied, "Arsidas, when I first heard of Poliarchus's death, I seemed past all hope and comfort: now, when he lives, and is only in danger, may the worst of griefs befall me, if I by my diligence preserve not his life, or else perish together with him! I will go the king: my silence would now be criminal. He shall know from me how much he is indebted to Poliarchus; and even, if the
 gods

gods unhappily declare against us, it shall be my comfort to know, that I have omitted no virtuous means to save us both from destruction."

Seleniffa was amazed at the boldness of her mistress's resolution, fearing the king's displeasure, if those things she had so long concealed from him should come to his knowledge by the confession of Argenis. But there was neither time, nor place, nor reason to dissuade her: all must be trusted to fortune; for Argenis was already hastening to Meleander. A few of her train went after her, as on a sudden business, and presently after Seleniffa followed them.

The king was then in the garden full of cares for Poliarchus, who was certainly reported to be in custody. Unhappy old man, never suffered by Fortune to take any repose! What should he say? What do? Every thing was against him, all things conspired to bring him sorrow! It was but two days since he had wept in private for his death, till he seemed
to

to have drowned his fault in his tears; but now the cruel fates had brought his life again in question. Should he injure the young man by a cruel sentence, or by a dangerous act of justice cut off the new springing peace of Sicily?

And now those who hated Poliarchus were got together, who loudly affirmed, that while that young man lived there would be no quiet in Sicily. Archombrotus was by, who pitied the king little less than Poliarchus. He watched for the breaking out of the wishes of men, that he might know the friends of Poliarchus from his enemies. Ibburanes was just arrived, who with Dimalbius, a priest of his own rank, was consulting how they might defend Poliarchus, when suddenly Argenis came to the king; but her wisdom so governed her grief, that she would not plead her cause before the business required it. The death which she resolved on, in case of failure of success, gave her courage and security; yet

yet casting her eyes upon the enemies of Poliarchus, she could hardly suppress her indignation: for there were none present but such as loved or hated Poliarchus to the last degree of extremity.

C H A P. XVII.

Observations on madness. Who Heraleon was. The coming of Lycogenes.

AND now whilst all stood in awful silence, as if the fate of Sicily were depending! attentive to the doubtful event, Eurimedes entered, leading by the hand one Heraleon, a man, whose madness only had made him known at court. “And this, said he, is our Poliarchus! this is he, who by the country people is brought back from flight.” Then Heraleon falling on his knees, and holding up his hands, asked pardon. The king, now somewhat relieved, demanded smiling, what was his offence? “Nothing, said he, but that I am Poliarchus.”

All present burst into laughter at this declaration, and the king asked Eurimides if this were done in jest or in earnest? “I stood at the castle gate (replied he) as your majesty commanded, to receive Poliarchus;

Poliarchus; I saw a company of peasants surrounding this man; he that seemed their chief, bragged much of their loyalty, and of their diligence in taking Poliarchus; but I soon saw their Poliarchus was Hera-leon. I restrained my laughter, and asked by what good fortune they had fallen upon this prey? The peasant replied, "Such of us as were early at work this morning, saw this man spurring his horse along the fields, and wondered to see him ride where there was no path, making his way towards a hill that was difficult to climb. We first thought he had lost his way, but afterwards suspecting, we resolved to pursue him. But he shunning all men, still turned his horse aside, till being out of wind he could go no farther; then espying a cave, he ran away on foot, and there hid himself. A good many of us being by this time got together, entered the cave and drew him forth, trembling and crying. Being asked who he was, and why he hid himself, he freely confessed that he was Poliarchus. His cloaths were indeed too mean

mean for Poliarchus, but we easily believed that he had changed them in order to escape; we bound him without delay, and as you see have brought him to the king."

I praised the fidelity of the peasants, and dismissed them to their work; and this man I have brought before my lord the king, that he may pronounce his doom. While Eurimides was speaking, the most serious in company could not refrain from laughter, for they knew that Heraleon's weak brain had long since taken that turn, that he commonly called himself Poliarchus. Only Archombrotus was ignorant of it; whom Meleander beckoned to him, and informed him concerning Heraleon. "This man, Archombrotus, (said he) whom you may wonder at, is not mad in all respects; he governs his family, he remembers his business, nor does he seem foolish in conversation except you mention Poliarchus; then he rages, and exclaims that he is Poliarchus, and that the praises due to his name are unjustly transferred to

to another. It is above six months since this conceit took possession of his weak mind. It is likely that when the beacons were fired he supposed himself fought after, and fled away for fear, and these ignorant men, taking no notice of his looks or his madness, have used him like the man he named himself. But we will hear him speak for himself. "Tell me, Poliarchus, what made thee fly?" "Nay," answered Heraleon, "what made thee, O king, force me to fly? Among my friends and acquaintances, there was none but advised me to fly, and under this mean habit I thought to escape. Oh! that I had never been Poliarchus!" The king turned about, being ready to laugh, but was suddenly moved with a sense of the miseries of human nature, which is subject to this additional evil, in the best part of it, besides bodily sickness, and the injuries of fortune. The king's physician, called Philip, was by, who, unrequested, in order to display his learning, gave a tedious and affected definition of madness in general,

general, and that of Heraleon in particular. But Meleander interrupted him, saying, "You should add, that this kind of madness, in some degree, hardly any man escapes. There are few who do not imagine within themselves something more foolish, or more dangerous than this man's believing himself Poliarchus. One man thinks there is no God; another, that all things are gods. One thinks pleasure is the chief good; another, that the gods cannot, or will not, punish wickedness. Finally, most men, in some sense, are more mad than Heraleon, only their frenzy is more concealed, or more agreeable to the fashions of the world. And it is so much the more to be lamented, because they *will* not be restored to their right minds, but he *cannot*."

All this time Heraleon remained upon his knees, thinking the king turned aside to determine his punishment. There were many who persuaded the king to see the scene go forward, and of these, some pretended to intercede for his pardon; others
calling

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calling out for justice, making a sport of his hopes and fears. But Meleander, who shuddered at the remembrance of Poliarclus, thinking it a cruelty to sport with that hero's name, whose supposed death he lamented, and accused himself as guilty of, he delivered Heracleon from his fears, telling him he was pardoned, and bidding him go about his business.

And now they were informed that Lycogenes was coming; the king considering with what countenance he should be received, and in what words he should speak to him, withdrew into another room, and reclining on his arm, began purposely to talk to Argenis. Lycogenes entered Magella with a small retinue, and those unarmed, to show his confidence, being proudly secure, not in the integrity of his heart, but presuming on the king's disposition, and the strength of his faction, even among those about him. Some of the king's friends, among whom was Timonides, went to meet him as of their own accord, but indeed by order of the king,

king, and brought him, swelling with pride, into the presence chamber.

He came in with a confident air, and seeing the king with Argenis, bowed down to the ground; then coming forward a little, he saluted them a second time in the same manner. Meleander as yet did not vouchsafe him a look, seeming to be engaged in conversation with Argenis; but when Lycogenes approached within a few paces of the king, he suddenly turned; and with a chearful countenance looked upon him. He then kneeled, and the king gave him his right hand, which he kissed; after this he was welcomed by the king, and many courtesies passed between them. Lycogenes then briefly excused the necessity he was under in taking arms, as being driven to it by those who laid snares for his life; and said, he would not have waited for public assurances, or treaties of peace, but to be secured from his enemies that were about the king. Meleander only replied, that all hatred must now be forgot, and like-

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wife all mention of it forborne ; that the next day, in the temple of Pallas, the gods should be witnesses of their reconciliation. Afterwards they fell into other discourses, both feigning a perfect satisfaction to each other, which is one of the common arts of courts. Eurimedes, by the king's command, that day invited Lycogenes and his chief friends to dinner ; with some of the nobility of the other side to meet them ; among whom was Dunalbius, who, though he were a foreigner, yielded to no Sicilian in affection to the king. He was in the rank of noble priests of the scarlet robe, and had adorned this dignity with the most excellent endowments of the mind ; active, and fit for business ; happy, both in making friends and keeping them ; being most sincerely free among the virtuous, and of a most happy disposition, in which the excellence of his learning, and the protection of the muses and sciences shone conspicuously ; none of which were excluded by his more active talents for business and employments.

ments. He came to Sicily when the troubles began, and was most useful to the king, both by his affection and abilities. Among his principal friends also, was Nicopompus, whom also Eurimedes invited to his feast.

C H A P. XVIII.

*A discourse on government, in regard of a
commonwealth, and of elective kings.*

AT the feast of Eurimedes there were many free discourses; and taking occasion from the mead they drank, they talked of the nature and government of bees. A young man, called Anaximander, nephew to Lycogenes, either thinking to please his uncle, whom he knew to be an enemy to the regal power, or to make a shew of his own philosophy, denied that to be true which is reported of bees, that they are governed by a king. He said it was a fiction of vain and credulous antiquity, to be compared with the fable of singing swans, or of a lion trembling at the crowing of a cock, with many other absurdities which the tradition of our ancestors had given to fame for truths; but that all creatures naturally desire liberty, and not to be under the command of
 3 another.

another. When he had thus spoken, the rest fell into a common argument, concerning what kind of government was the best and most just. Here Anaximander did not hesitate to prefer that, where either the people or the nobility governed, to monarchy. Why should all things depend upon one man's will and pleasure, whom, if he grow wicked, neither fear nor modesty can restrain, and who by his example or cruelty may deeply wound the commonwealth? "How much more chearfully would the people (said he) bring their money into the public treasury, when it shall be so employed by the wisdom and fidelity of many, as that every man may reckon himself still to have a right and interest in it; than when at the pleasure of the prince, it is lavished upon favorites and worthless men, with a liberality as improvident for himself as unjust and cruel to the people? How many more men would qualify themselves for the service of the state, would enrich their minds with useful knowledge in the

arts of war and peace, and labour to be esteemed by their fellow-citizens, when they knew the rewards of virtue and the dignities of the state were to be obtained by their suffrages! The principal honours of a republic lie open to merit; but when their disposal is confined to one house, they are scarcely ever bestowed upon desert, or upon honest and able men. Again, is it possible there should be as much wisdom in *one* king, as in a *senate* chosen out of the nobility and gentry? for they being of ripe years and eminent virtues, both from emulation of virtue, and fear of shame, will advise and do such things as are best for the commonwealth. But kings are generally spoiled by flattery, and often their dispositions are such as will not bear admonition; their minds, even though naturally excellent and noble, being perverted by their vain conceit, that how worthily-soever they behave, they have no higher reward to obtain; and however they offend, there is no tribunal to render an account to. We must conclude

clude therefore that nothing is so desirable, nothing so agreeable to nature as liberty, which they only could be said to enjoy who lived according to their own laws, and that had power to choose and to punish their own magistrates. Nor do I forget, added he, who or where I am : I know that I am subject to the king of Sicily, and that kind of government under which a man is born ought best to please him : but as men born of sickly constitutions must of necessity love and cherish their own weak bodies, yet may admire and praise their happiness whom a more sound and healthy constitution preserves from maladies to which they are subject ; so do I honour and obey the royal dignity to which I am born a subject ; yet I nevertheless admire the liberty of free states, which depend only upon themselves. Nor in this do I wrong my sovereign Meleander, whose virtues if all men could equal, nothing were more divine than kings, nor any government among men more beneficial than monarchy."

Anaximander thus boldly speaking, Nicopompus could no longer endure; he was bred to learning from his childhood, and disdaining to be confined altogether to book-knowledge, left school very young, and came to the courts of kings to finish his education, and lay the foundation of a public life. He there improved his talents both by study and employment, being by birth and disposition suited to that kind of life; well esteemed by the great ones, and especially by the king, whose cause, with the rest of princes, he now undertook to defend. "What wouldst thou do, Anaximander, (he exclaimed) under a popular government, who takest so great a liberty both of thinking and speaking here?—Believe me, in a popular state you durst not so freely praise monarchies, as you have here extolled democracies and aristocracies; from whence you may understand this to be the *true*, and the other only a *fancied* liberty. And since you appeal to nature for the love of liberty, you may as well from that argument

argument cry down all kinds of government, for there are laws and magistrates to be obeyed as well in republics as in monarchies, which differ but in the same degrees from liberty of nature. If mankind of their own accord would be restrained within the bounds of justice, all kind of government would be superfluous and unjust, in compelling men, naturally just, to an unprofitable servitude; but since from the wickedness and depravity of men so great a happiness cannot be hoped for, that form of government must be most agreeable to nature that best restrains people from wandering beyond the bounds of virtue, and even of nature itself. The question is not, whether the command should be in the hands of many or of few, but under which the subject lives most uprightly and securely. You have played fast and loose in confounding democracy and aristocracy, which in themselves are far different. To make an ostentation of liberty, you mention the peoples power; and to shew us the convenience, you speak

of the wisdom of the senate. If you speak of a democracy, what can the wisdom of senators do there, where the people's liberty bestows offices upon the ignorant and unworthy, and where their giddy heads are carried away by any violence and faction, insomuch that it is become the sign of a virtuous man, to be persecuted by the ill judging multitude. But if you prefer an aristocracy, you ought to blush, Anaximander, to give the preference to such a senate before a monarchy, where by multiplying the number of masters, they do but add to the baseness of servitude, for instead of one sovereign you have as many as there are senators. But you say the industry of youth hath more encouragement to labour and study, and commonwealths abound in famous men, while kingdoms averse to virtue and ingenious studies, will wither and fall to ruin. In which state is this, I pray? But in either, what hope of this kind is there that is not greater in a monarchy? But let us for a moment suppose that a republick and a monarchy are sick with the vices

vices of their governors, in which will you find an easier cure? The faults of a king are at least cured by death, and better things may be hoped for from his successor; but a corrupted senate cannot be purged by many deaths, for their depraved manners grow worse and worse; till at length by their fall, they crush the commonwealth in pieces."

While Nicopompus argued thus, Lycogenes began to fear that ill-will would fall upon him, because his nephew had spoke too freely against the royal dignity; beside it made against his own design, which was not to abolish royalty, but to enjoy it himself. Another argument seemed more to favour his purpose, which was to accuse the customs of those nations, who devoted themselves to one family, and to extoll such, as after the king's death elected a successor. And this best suited Lycogenes, who aiming at the crown of Sicily, thought a tumultuous election of the people, his best chance of obtaining it; and also, because Dimalbuis was there, who he pro-

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mised himself, would be on his side, because in the college of priests the highest honour is not obtained by birth, but by election.

“The day would be spent, Nicopompus, (said he) before you would be able to speak all, that may be said on either side of the question; for which of the philosophers have not found something to say in favour of kings, or of commonwealths. I myself am of your opinion, that a state is best governed by one head; but here a doubt arises, whether the people would do better, to bind their allegiance to one family, or keep in their own hands, a power to elect the person whom they esteem the most worthy of all others. For why should men succeed their ancestors in the throne, unless they also succeed them in those virtues, for which they were chosen kings?

Besides, if monarchies were all elective, kings would be more grateful to their people, from whom they receive their crowns, and use their authority with moderation. Whereas now, as if men were
born

born their slaves, when the subjects obey them, they are not thanked or respected; and if they do not, it is a capital crime. And when fortune, as if to make a jest of us, places in the throne an infant, or a fool, what can be more miserable to the state? Then all that are in office reign, all oppress the people, who being trodden upon, not only by the king, but by others, have not even this poor comfort left, that they are ill used only by princes. If we do not set the ignorant son of a pilot in his father's place, lest he cast away those, whom his parent's skill hath saved, nor give the chair in a school of philosophy to the master's next of kin, but the nearest to him in wisdom; why should we commit the great charge of governing to those, who, if they reign by law, by the same law we are ruined. I would allow of this constitution, if I could believe that cities were built, and people created, only for the sake of kings; for then let them overturn and destroy, that which is their own, and let the people patiently endure that fate, which
the

the gods have ordained them ; but if this dignity was appointed for the good and the preservation of the people, I wonder our ancestors did not take care to guard against a worse evil, than this power was thought necessary to prevent : but these things I refer to thee, Dimalbius, for a fuller discussion, thou as thy religion teaches, mayest well approve, and justify to us this custom of electing princes, for as much as you observe the same method of electing your high priest, in your holy consistories.

CHAP. XIX.

An argument concerning the inconveniences of elective kingdoms, and the advantages of making the crown hereditary.

DUNALBIUS, who was ever unwilling to speak in public, was now brought into a dilemma ; for he must either assent to Lycogenes's opinion, or dispute the point with him : besides, he saw the eyes of all the company, and particularly of Nicopompus, bent upon him. He shewed by his countenance, his disapprobation of Lycogenes's reasoning ; but observing the obstinate silence of all, and their looks inviting him to speak, he thus began.

“ I must believe, Lycogenes, that you have spoken thus for argument's sake, rather than to express your real opinion ; unless reverence to our profession has so influenced you, that because we chuse our high priests by voices, you would have
the

the same method observed in every order of men. But you must not confound the rites of the scepter with those of the priesthood; for observe the difference of these conditions. A law of sacred antiquity forbids us to marry; how then can we leave our priesthood to our children? Besides, there are many rites in our holy offices, which the priests must themselves perform, and cannot commit to others. If the inheritance of this office were to descend to children, what then would become of the altars, the temples, and the service of the gods, which cannot be committed to profane persons, nor to any but those dedicated to this service? So also we are taught not to labour after worldly riches, nor encumber ourselves with earthly cares, but to reckon heaven for our house, our family, and our posterity, and all other things that we enjoy, not our own but the gods, which are only administered by us their officers, but descend not to our family. If the priesthood should belong only to one family,

family, how long, think you, would they remember that they derived their greatness from the gods, and not from themselves? Or how long would either the king or people endure the pride of such a kindred, who now submit to them, not as to a stock or family, but only to the sanctity of their place? But it is far otherwise in temporal governments, which are supported by strength and riches; whose end is to keep the people in peace, and to curb the wicked by the power of laws. In these governments, succession is more beneficial in many respects. One of the principal is, to disarm the ambition of the nobles, who, in hope of obtaining the crown, would raise combustions in the state, and against the king. Let us imagine, therefore, that this custom of election should prevail in those brave and active nations, which now quietly submit to hereditary princes; what think you would those nobles do, who now can hardly endure a superior? Every one would despise a king, who had been of their own rank, and

and would leave children, who should be their equals ; but when the succession is grown ancient in one family, the reverence of former kings lives in their posterity, so that by long custom, we respect even the cradles of children born to a crown; nor do ours disdain to obey those, who before they saw the light were destined to command them ; and it is likely, that a certain greatness more than ordinary is instilled into the minds of such as are born and educated to sovereignty, either from nature, education, or the care of the gods : for certainly, the custom of being honoured and respected takes off the edge of that supercilious pride, which springs from sudden fortune and advancement ; whilst, on the other hand, an equal and noble confidence is attained by them, which makes their commands respected, and prevents their falling into contempt. Besides, they converse with the nobility in an easy and familiar manner, not blushing at the remembrance of any former inferiority of station : they accustom
themselves

themselves to great affairs, and faithfully labour for the good of their kingdom, as being the established patrimony of their children.

“Now he that is raised to this dignity by election, cannot forget his former situation, to which his children must return: so that his attention is drawn off from the state to cares that more nearly concern him, in making friends for his son or his kinsman, among those that have votes at the election; or else enriching his family to such a degree, as that all men may know there hath been a king in it. So that the public ornaments, and the whole wealth of a state are, under one pretext or another, devoured by a private family. Neither do these elective kings hurt the state by their own faults only, but also with those of the nobles, whom they bind to them by a pernicious indulgence, that they may secure their interest to elect a successor out of their family; or perhaps they even fear to displease the future king, who may hereafter
revenge

revenge himself upon their family. How then can you admire the wisdom of electing kings, which continually obtrudes new families upon a state, to be fattened upon the spoils of a commonwealth? Look on the Aquili themselves, how often have they weakened their state by these cares? Among them, he whose constitutions they call golden, at what excessive price did he purchase the electors voices for his son? And afterwards, when he could not pay them, he granted them the revenues of the state, which at first were only mortgaged to them, but by the weakness and folly of succeeding princes, became at last their inheritance.

“There are many great undertakings in states, that require time to bring them to maturity, the events of which contribute greatly to the health and safety of a state. How shall these, or any other improvements, be begun or ended under an elective king? The beginning of these works are attended with labour and expence, and the harvest of them is to be reaped in succeeding

ceeding times under other kings. And whose, saith the prince to himself, shall these things be? — my childrens? — my friends? — No — but strangers, or perhaps my greatest enemies. Shall I for them lay a foundation of fame, riches, pleasures, and security, with infinite cares and expence? Or shall I not rather disregard these considerations, and bestow all in my power upon myself and family? Nay, even suppose I should encourage these works of public utility, it may be, that my successors, through negligence, weakness, or envy at my glory, may overthrow my works, and destroy all that I have done. Those things, with a fear, that often proves true, are the very bane of commonwealths. These motives deter elective kings from any great and royal undertakings for the good of the state.

“Notwithstanding these inconveniences, the ELECTION of these kings in itself is attended with still greater mischiefs than their reign; for how can it be hoped, that in fierce and active nations, these elections should

should be quiet and peaceable? How can they be free from open violence, or secret corruption, where many men, equal in fortune, birth and courage, can neither yield to one another, nor yet all reign together? But when the votes are equal between two candidates, both claiming the crown, and none able to decide between them, what troubles must arise from hence? What long and bloody wars have ensued! Add to this, that the people, who claim a right to make their kings, are often bold enough without right to depose them. I will not go to antiquity for an instance: behold Aquilius, elected to govern two kingdoms, and within a short time afterwards, by the revolt of those who chose him, deprived of them both! Are not these, think you, greater mischiefs than those which may be occasioned by the folly or infamy of hereditary kings? I do not mean to deny, that either will not be prejudicial to a state; for what order of government was ever invented, that was not subject to some inconveniences? But such
storms

storms are much easier to be borne, than those which arise from the troubled sea of elections. Neither do I believe, that the best and fittest man to reign is always most likely to obtain the crown by election. Oftentimes, he that is principal in birth and interest, is most deficient in the endowments of the mind, as if the destinies feared, if they should bestow all the excellencies of mind and fortune upon one man, they should of a mortal make a deity. He, that in these elections is generally chosen, is either the most powerful or the most fortunate, which a man may be, and yet wholly ignorant of the art of government.

“ To conclude, we must suppose the desires and purposes of all the electors so full of integrity, that in chusing a king they seek only for virtue, and are so happy to find it; further, and suppose that the modesty of the candidates, and the union of the people are so perfect, that to such a king so chosen they will willingly submit; and that the integrity of the newly-elected king is such, that he will always remember
what

what he was, and boldly punish abuses and reward virtue; when all these things coincide, but not till then, will I proclaim this to be the highest felicity that mortals can enjoy, and think those nations that enjoy it the most beloved of the gods.

“But in the mean time, it seems we cannot hope for this happiness; the vices and depravity of mankind declare it to be impossible: and therefore is the wisdom of those nations unjustly condemned, which have submitted themselves to one race of kings; for this form of government is subject to the fewest inconveniences; being attended with quietness at home, and splendor abroad.”

Lycogenes was greatly enraged, that his hope in Dimalbius deceived him; but lest his displeasure should be observed by the company, he turned it off with jests, of which he was a master, and spoke no more upon serious subjects; and with these Eurimedes helped him forward, who was not pleased that such points of dangerous philosophy should be discussed at this table.

C H A P. XX.

*Poliarchus receives letters from Argenis.
He consults with Arsidas, leaves the cave,
and comes in disguise to Magella.*

ARSIDAS was tired of these discourses, and the feast being almost ended he retired, and went to wait on Argenis, to whom he related how free Lycogenes had made with kings. She briefly lamented the wickedness of the times, and then gave him a packet to deliver to Poliarchus, saying, by that he would know her pleasure. She recommended to his care all that related to shipping him, the journey, the concealment, and whatever concerned the safety of Poliarchus. "To thee, O Arsidas, said she, who preservest so worthy a man from the malice of his enemies, the gods, and thy own virtuous mind shall be a sufficient reward! Poliarchus, if he be fortunate, will gratefully requite thy fidelity, or if the rest fail, expect from me the reward of thy goodness."

Encouraged by the discourse of Argenis, he took his leave, and after some conference with Archombrotus, went late in the evening to Timoclea's house, where the peasants, now convinced of their mistake, were making excuses for their outrageous behaviour the day before. While she considering that she had run herself into danger, though those searchers had not the fortune to discover her, entertained them courteously, seeking their good opinions, in case she should hereafter have occasion for them. Arfidas spoke kindly to them, and they being dismissed, he descended to Poliarchus, who almost sick with grief and delay, cried out hastily as he saw him coming, "What news, my Arfidas? Do you mean to bury me here? Free me from this darkness, though it be to throw me into the hands of mine enemies, for I no longer can endure this confinement." Arfidas, knowing how much joy he brought him in the letters, gave him the packet, and bade him look on the hand and seal. Poliarchus, overjoyed, cries
out,

out, "How is it, Arfidas, am I remembered!" But he would not name the princess, because Timoclea was within hearing. Opening the letter, he withdrew a little aside, that his countenance might not betray his emotions. Having read the letters, he calls Arfidas aside, and asked him, if he might trust to his disguise and false hair, and go to bid adieu to Argenis, or follow the safer course, and embark for Messina? Arfidas advised him to embark directly; but he, though he had asked his advice, being desirous to see Argenis, withstood that opinion. His friend perceiving the cause, and desirous to save a lover's blushes, seemed to change his opinion, and on recollection persuaded him to go to the princess, as it would be easy for him to enter the temple of Pallas, which is open to all, where the next day Argenis, according to custom, would stand at the altar, which the poorest votaries are not forbidden to approach and to kiss.

Poliarchus being thus resolved, they called Timoclea, and told her, that by

break of day he was to go on board the ship that was to carry him to Italy; for they concealed his intention to visit the court. He told her, that he would never forget her kind entertainment, that his life, and all the blessings attending it, were owing to her, and should always be devoted to her service. While the lady, amidst her prayers and vows for his safety, melted into tears: for she had considered this noble stranger more like a son than a guest; he was become the object of her tenderest cares; and she feared greatly lest Poliarchus, when he left her roof, should meet with worse fortune: at length, she departed weeping, and left him to take his rest.

The night being spent on all sides between hopes and fears, the lady returned in the morning with Arsidas into the cave, and brought with her bread dipt in wine, with which she made them break their fasts, their appetites being hardly yet awakened. A little before day-break, she let Poliarchus and Gelanorus out of the
cave

cave into the fields. Gelanorus went directly to Messina with Arfidas's letter, for he dwelt at Messina, being governor of the city. The contents of the letter were, that his wife should have a good ship ready at the haven, for that he must needs make a voyage to Rhegium, wishing her carefully to conceal the bearer of that letter, and that within four days he would be at Messina. When Gelanorus was departed, Poliarchus followed him, who rode gently before him. He was on foot in mean attire, leaning upon a staff, having rubbed his hands over with soot, lest their whiteness should betray him.

C H A P. XXI.

The device of Argenis to see Poliarchus. The ceremonies of the sacrifice. Poliarchus takes his leave.

THEY were now come within the city of Magella, where the door-keeper having opened the temple of Pallas, had left it free for all that chose to present themselves before the goddess. As it was early, and the people had not yet taken up the best places for seeing the solemnity, Poliarchus took his seat near the altar. But Arsidas went to Argenis, and informed her how devout a votary waited for her in the temple. The princess was astonished, and struck at the same time with joy for herself, and fear for Poliarchus. “Arsidas, said she, this business is full of danger. The king and Lycogenes will soon come to the temple; if Poliarchus be concealed only by his cloaths and false hair, think you that none of the nobles standing round will

will discover this deceit? especially at a time when all men are full of suspicions, and when they examine every man's countenance, as it were, to seek out whatever is concealed in it? Indeed I would rather bring him to the castle, but that I fear there, lest the guard should too strictly examine and discover his disguise. But, on recollection, I will go to the king, and tell him, that ever since I was appointed priestess of Pallas, this day of the Fair, it was never denied to the meanest suppliant to offer their devotion. But when himself and Lycogenes come to the temple to ratify the peace, it will be filled with their guards and attendants, and there will not be room for the people, nor to allow the poor to pay their devotions; therefore, if it please him (that the custom may not be broken) I will go first to the altar and receive the common people, that they may perform the rites and be purified; that this service being finished, he may more conveniently attend the sacrifice, and perform the public ceremonies. So shall I

without fear see Poliarchus, and among the ignorant people our contrivance will not be suspected.

Arfidas applauded her invention, and beseeching her to make haste, the lady went immediately to the king, who approved of her opinion, being deceived by this ingenious device. And she hastening the solemnity, attended by her guard and a train of women, went to the temple.

Now this was the order of their sacrifices since Argenis was priestess. The Sicilians kept a fair, where the courts of justice were open; and the markets for trade and commerce: then were the king's edicts published, and the decrees against criminals. This time was also appointed for holy ceremonies and public solemnities; then came the country people from all the neighbouring villages to vend their commodities, and to buy what the city afforded. This day was dedicated to the service of Pallas; the doors were adorned with garlands and with laurel, and illuminated with tapers. The image of the goddess
was

was awfully severe, suitable to her armed figure; her bended brow, with her helmet, covering half her forehead, and the liveliness of her eyes made her appear beautifully fierce, yet with the modesty of a virgin. In her hand she held a golden spear, which by the lustre of the rays proceeding from it, made the people affirm that she frequently shook it. She bore Medusa's head upon her shield, which the sculptor had adorned with all the various colours that appear on the scales of serpents. Her posture was that of a warrior, her left foot advancing forward, so that the whole figure was turned most gracefully. At her feet lay Ericthonius, in the shape of a serpent writhing itself about the end of her spear.

The sacrifices crowned with garlands were brought to the door, for it was unlawful to shed blood within the temple; after water was set under the beasts for sacrifice, Argenis came in, gloriously attired as became a princess and a priestess; her robe was of exquisite workmanship, on

which was represented the birth of Pallas from the head of Jupiter; and also her contention with Neptune; the birth of the Olive, and her triumph on that occasion. The train of her garment was very long, and borne by six virgins. Her hair was bound with purple fillets, with sprigs of olive intermixed; and upon her head, a wreath from the same sacred tree. Thus adorned, she came to the sacrifices, covering her head with a veil. She first prayed, then sprinkled the victims with flowers and water; and lastly, struck them lightly on the forehead with a silver club; after which the priests cut their throats with knives, and examined their entrails, to find in them their fates, and the decrees of the gods. Then Argenis going to the altar, offered in a silver censer the usual incense to the gods. And taking the crown of olive from her head, she laid it with reverence at the feet of the armed image; that done, fresh incense, and the choicest perfumes were thrown upon the altar; and while the smoke ascended, the virgins who stood

stood nearest, and as many of the people as had skill in musick, joined in the following hymn to Pallas.

Ador'd on Earth, rever'd above,
Sprung from the better part of Jove!
Pallas, who knew'st no infancy,
From nursing loves and childhood free!
Oh virgin to our rites give aid!
While each Sicilian youth and maid,
Sounds forth thy attributes and praise
In solemn and melodious lays.

Goddeſs of war!—thy laws beſtow
On men their fate, life, weal, and woe!
A dart thy right, thy left hand holds
Meduſa's head, which who beholds
To marble turns. Oh! veil thy ſhield!
Reſerve its terrors for the field.

Goddeſs of peace!—thy bounteous hand
With thy own olive bleſs'd our land!
Thou to our virgins didſt impart
The ſpinſter's chaſte and uſeful art.
Ye maids invoke Minerva's name,
And with freſh incenſe feed the flame!

Tritonia, thee the watry moor,
And Ægypt's fertile land adore!
Thee, Argo's God-receiving bow'rs
Invoke; and Athens' ſtately tow'rs!

Our Sicily vouchsafe to grace,
And hither turn thy radiant face.

Thy blessings grant, thy succour bring,
Defend our long-preserved king!

You chorus of Sicilian maids,
Acknowledge Pallas' pow'r and aids.

Sound forth the valiant virgin's praise,
In solemn and harmonious lays!

When the music was ended, the assembly openly offered up their prayers for the health and prosperity of the king and the people, for the wholsomeness of the air, and fertility of the soil. Afterwards in their private prayers, every man asked for such blessings as were necessary for his own private family. Then Argenis sitting on a high seat near the altar, holding a consecrated bough in her hand, bound round with ribbons, which was dipped in holy water, and lightly sprinkled with the blood of the victims; while the people believed, if they touched their foreheads or lips with it, that was sufficient to defend them from harm. The guard stood in a double row about Argenis, leaving a space for two at a time, lest the rude multitude

itude should incommode the princess. So being admitted, they kneeled down, and were touched with the consecrated bough, and so departed. None of the common people were excluded, and more came to the ceremony for the sight of Argenis, than for devotion to Pallas.

That day, when Arsidas brought Poliarchus, the holy rites were performed in an old temple of Pallas at Magella, and Argenis came earlier than usual, pretending (as has been said) a desire to dismiss the people, before the king and Lycogenes should come to the temple; but in reality, that she might see Poliarchus with less danger. When she had touched the sacrifices at the temple gate, she left them in the hands of the priests, and entered the porch with the censer in her hand; and with a mind full of perturbation, came to the place where Arsidas had informed her Poliarchus fate; whom, when she espied in base attire and borrowed hair, fixing mournful eyes upon her, she was so divided between rage and pity, that she almost forgot her office and devotion; how-

however, she went forward to the altar, and while the rest were singing the solemn hymn, she, looking upon the image of the goddess, poured out her secret grief to all the heavenly powers: and with a tacit exprobatation, reminded them of her unspotted innocence, purity, and faith; as if she had said, that now was the time she needed their help, if ever they would send it. If they regarded or governed the affairs of mortals, if there was any reward for virtue, why were they so cruel to herself and Poliarchus! They well know how chaste and spotless a love she bore to that worthy man, whom if the laws of nature permitted, she could wish were her brother. "At least, she prayed, preserve him in his flight, and if you have decreed misfortunes for both, let him go free, and pour it all and wholly upon my head."

Neither did Poliarchus less experience the force of grief, and the violence of contending passions. Must he then leave that country which most delighted him, and fly from it like a traitor? How unsuitable was this to his birth and spirit? Those things
that

that had formerly given him pleasure, now seemed to rend his heart with grief. All the virtues of Argenis, all her perfections, rushed at once into his memory; even those things, which till then he esteemed as trifles, his imagination magnified, now he was about to lose them. Among so many sorrows, none seemed greater to him than the pain he should be the cause of to Argenis. Nor was another doubt quite excluded from his thoughts, which was, lest those vows that had passed between himself and the princess, should, by time and absence, be at length forgotten. Sometimes his anger rose, and the thought of invading Sicily with an armed force. At the next instant he checked the thought, as fearing to wound Argenis, in her father and her country. And thus, his anger being blended with his grief, rises, wanders, or languishes, according to the different degrees of that passion. While his mind was thus perplexed, the verses being thrice repeated, there was a general silence. Argenis sat down near the altar, holding
out

out the holy bough to all comers. Selenissa, and the band of virgins stood behind her seat; Eurimedes and Eristhenes on each side; a pair of men very ill matched, being of quite opposite characters. The soldiers were ranged in two long ranks to the door, marking out the way to such as would come to the princess. Eurimedes observing many changes in the countenance of Argenis, asked her if any thing ailed her? She taking the opportunity of speaking to him as often as she found herself oppressed with too much grief, turned herself towards Eurimedes. The people being passed, Poliarchus was almost the last that should approach the sacred bough; but he wanted both strength and courage to step forward, and was long expected by the trembling and heartless lady.

Oh! the madness of lovers! They run the hazard of a short and silent meeting, to reap a momentary pleasure, and now they repent that they have tempted grief and danger, and are unable to use the opportunity. At length, however, the unhappy

happy lover, who now found his staff of
use to him, stepped forward to Argenis,
and fell on his knees as if he had been at
prayers. "Farewel, said he, most chaste
and virtuous priestess! Remember, dear
lady, that thy Pallas departs ever to be
thine, and will not return (if thou per-
mittest) without her father's thunder!"
Argenis understood him, but durst not
answer, yet with her eyes fixed upon him,
she spoke more effectually than words
could do. Poliarchus was unable to rise
from her feet, and Seleniffa began to be
in fear for them both; but Eurimedes
supposing the man stayed there out of
clownish ignorance, with a wand struck
him on the side, smiling withal. Poliar-
chus was dearly beloved by Eurimedes,
so knowing this injury to be done to his
cloaths only, he arose quickly, thinking
himself deservedly corrected. But Argenis
was not so easily contented to see her lover
struck, she could hardly restrain herself
from commanding Eurimedes out of her
sight; but following with her eyes her
departing

departing Poliarchus, she happily saw Ar-
 fidas at the temple gate, waiting, as she
 supposed, to conduct him, and assist him
 in his flight. He having congratulated
 the king on the peace being concluded,
 pretended a necessity of going into Italy,
 to see his father-in-law; and having ob-
 tained leave, he went to the temple of
 Pallas, where he saw Poliarchus just
 coming from the altar. Then calling him
 aside, he advised him to go directly out
 of town, by a gate but little frequented,
 and to take the way that led to Messina,
 for about two miles; then to hide himself
 in the bushes and wait for him, who as
 soon as he had spoken to Argenis would
 follow, and quickly overtake him.

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C H A P. XXII.

Meleander and Lycogenes come to the temple to ratify the peace. Argenis feigns herself inspired. She refuses to sacrifice and makes excuses. The king and court are troubled at these omens; yet they swear to the conditions of the peace.

IN the mean time Meleander sent to Argenis, to desire her to finish the sacrifice for the people: for the day was far advanced, and the temple must be free for him and Lycogenes. She was hardly come to herself, and by degrees gave way to those passions, she thought she had overcome. However, she returned answer to the king, that all which concerned the people was finished; and that he might, whenever it pleased him, perform the sacrifice as he had appointed. A mighty train besitting the magnificence, both of Meleander and the proud Lycogenes, waited at the palace gate, attending when they

they should go to the temple; Lycogenes himself was in the king's bed-chamber under shew of duty, holding discourse with him upon various subjects, and mostly of a chearful kind. When it was time, Meleander in a royal habit, with a purple cloak, holding in his right hand a scepter, and adorned with all the insignia of majesty, came forth to his guard; preceded by Lycogenes, by whose side (at the king's command) walked Archombrotus. Before them those distinguished by their high rank and offices; a great number of the young nobles preceeded these. The people could hardly be kept back, being greedy of seeing and thronging most where they are forbidden. The name of a king, long used to reign over them, and the reverend aspect of Meleander bespeaking a mild and gentle disposition, dignified with conscious majesty, drew the eyes of all men upon him. Not only his faithful friends, but such of his enemies as had revolted more through rashness and levity than wickedness, were moved at the sight; so that the king had

no.

no reason to repent of that day's business, which grieved some, and shamed others, that he should be compelled to such an agreement.

The people therefore, in low murmuring, pitied their prince; but a certain old officer, bred up at court, made answer in his royal master's hearing to another who asked him, if he had ever seen a countenance more expressive of gentleness and sweetness than the king's? "I should think him more gentle, fellow soldier, if he were not cruel to himself." When Meleander heard this expression drop, from an honest man and a faithful servant, he was troubled; so recollecting at the same time what Lycogenes had said, at the feast of Eurimedes the day before; while his mind was absorbed in these reflections, he stumbled against a stone that stuck up, and fell down upon his hands. A sudden cry of such as observed the accident, struck fear into those behind. But the nearest at hand raised up the king, and presently made it known that he had received no harm; while

while he smiling turned it off with a jest, saying, he was obliged to the Sicilian earth that loved her king, and because she could not rise to salute him, thus courted him to her arms, and that he willingly embraced her as his own. But the standers by, judged it to be a good or bad omen, according as they were affected to the king or to Lycogenes; for what could it portend, when the king fell down at Lycogenes's feet? how strangely, how suddenly was he thrown down?

While these thoughts employed their minds, the foremost of the train were come to the court of the temple; where the victims, crowned with garlands, stood ready for the sacrifice, and the priests waited, expecting when Argenis should come and invoke the gods to be present at their offerings. But she, more and more subdued by increasing grief, retired to a corner of the temple, and having sent her attendants to some distance, "What wilt thou do now, wretched Argenis! said she to herself, thou that art the cause of mischief to the most excellent

excellent of men ! What hast thou already seen and felt ; and to what farther sufferings art thou reserved ? If thou knowest thine own dignity, why dost thou not protect thy Poliarchus, and keep him here ? If he be thy betrothed husband, why is he banished alone ? Nothing is wanting to complete thy misfortune, but that thou shouldst be the herald, to ratify the peace between thy father and Lycogenes ! A peace, oh, all ye gods ! that they have sealed in the danger and distress of Poliarchus ! How can I dare to speak of, or even to think of Poliarchus ? How call to mind his virtues, his graces, his looks, his words ? But, duty and the good of the kingdom, urge me to submit to this cruel necessity : yet how shall I offend against either, by refusing to have a hand in this fatal peace ? But does the safety of the kingdom depend on my fears ? perhaps my courage may restore, what my father's remissness has lost. But what shall I then do ? the crisis approaches. Behold, my father comes ! Lycogenes is near at hand !

I am

I am called to perform my office. If I refuse to assist at this peace, what excuse can I make? with what words shall I satisfy my father before all the people?" While she was thus speaking, her rage overcame her grief, and with looks, more majestic than usual, she rowled her angry eyes on every side, and just then, the last words of Poliarchus at his departure, struck her mind afresh, when he told her, Pallas went away her's, but would return in thunder. "Yes, said she, my Pallas is surely gone, why then should I stay here in vain? These prayers are prophane. This temple is without a deity. I know of no better course, than to feign an inspiration and a spirit of prophesy. I will say that the goddess forbids me to minister to these sacrifices. So shall I avoid being instrumental to such a peace, and give more freedom to my thoughts for great resolutions." When she had thus resolved, being of a most ingenious wit, and urged on at that time by warm passions, she began to prepare a speech, like what the diviners use. Her eyes

eyes and countenance already inflamed by anger, greatly contributed to assist her in such a device as she intended. And while she was thus contriving, the messengers came and told her, the sacrifices waited for her.

Argenis was now more easy, having resolved what to trust to; she therefore answered she was coming, composing her thoughts and gestures to her intended stratagem.—And now the king and Lycogenes stood on each side of the sacrifice, the nobles surrounding them, in silence all concealing their disagreeing thoughts; the people flocking about them, left hardly room for the sacrifices. But now Argenis appeared an uncommon object, who, with her eyes wandering, and her hair dishevelled, staggered, as she went, like one distracted. Meleander was amazed, doubting what god, or what fury possessed his daughter. But she terribly rolling her eyes, began her speech not in verse, for the shortness of the warning made that impossible; but out of the common way of speaking, and

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after the manner of oracles ; so that it was easy for Nicopompus thus to versify them afterwards.

Why fly'st thou, sacred maid, and leav'st this place ?
Gone is my Pallas ! her averted face
And flying car I see : Oh boldness dire !
Banish'd she flies ! Why do we feed the fire
With frankincense, and on the altar lay
Our victims ? Take me thro' the clouds away,
And wherefoe'er thou goest thy vot'ry bear !—
Her arms she threat'ning shakes ! her dreadful spear
Sounds on her golden shield ! she scatters woes,
A bloody tract thro' troubled æther glows !
Oh, whither tend the fates ! why do we build
These temples, and their lofty arches gild ;
If still we dare by unjust impious war
The gods themselves from their own temples bar ?

When Argenis had spoken to this effect, like a prophetess, she fell into a shrieking, and perfectly resembled one possessed with the gods. A strange amazement had fixed the eyes of all upon her. But Meleander's thoughts were wholly employed on the oracle, which she had uttered. That Pallas was banished ; that the goddess at her departure had threatened ; and that some
grievous

grievous crime was committed:—These things, the less he understood them, the more fear they raised in his mind.

But now Argenis, as if the force of the spirit that constrained her to prophesy were spent, pulling off her priestly ornaments, came humbly to the king and besought him, that she might retire from the ceremonies; being ashamed of that unusual rapture, and unable to endure the gazing of so many people. The king, uneasy at so many presages, paused a while. He was fearful that Lycogenes might suspect him to be privy to these strange events, with design to interrupt the peace. But Argenis, while her father was musing, went directly to the palace, attended by her own guard. Arsidas, as if out of duty, followed her, and having received her commands to Poliarchus, presently departed.

In the mean time, a strange murmuring run through the affrighted multitude. Some said the peace was disapproved by the goddesses; others interpreted this prodigy to

portend great calamities to Sicily; while some again desired, that the priests might proceed with the sacrifice, and expiate the offence whatever it might be; above all, their voices were heard loudest, who called for the herald. For as the Sicilians derived their original and their manners from the Greeks, so the neighbourhood of Italy had brought in many ceremonies, among which was the religious rites of the heralds.

At this critical time, Meleander, to reconcile all differences of opinion, spoke thus; "It is the same thing, whether those agreements, made between men of honour, are ratified by the authority of Pallas or of Jupiter; come therefore, herald of Sicily, and perform the usual rites!"

Then the herald, in a long garment edged with purple, rehearsed a prayer in verse, containing many curses against covenant-breakers: then the sacrifices being slain, the king and Lycogenes held the entrails in their hands: from thence they
went

went into the temple, and laying their hands on the altar, they again engaged their faith before the gods. These ceremonies being performed, the whole train returned to the palace; but no joyful acclamations of the people followed them, nor were the congratulations, even of their friends, sincere. Yet the king dissembled his griefs as was necessary, and put on the appearance of mirth. He made a public feast the same day; and the next he went to the theatre, where orders were given for comedies only to be performed; for the king chose not that regal tragedies should at that time be exhibited. For many days together, the friends of both parties, being desired by Meleander and Lycogenes, not only laid aside all quarrels and ill humour, but met at frequent and mutual feasts, and appeared to have all confidence in each other, and were seemingly full of joy and security.

Argenis had kept her chamber several days, under pretence of sickness; but

shewed herself publicly, after she had received letters from Arfidas, wherein he informed her, that himself and his charge were safely arrived upon the coast of Italy.

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.



THE
PHŒNIX;
OR, THE
HISTORY
OF
POLYARCHUS AND ARGENIS.

BOOK II. CHAP. I.

The king's retreat into Eiperēté. A description of the place. Seleniffa does ill offices to Timoclea.

LYCOGENES believed he had gained a victory over Meleander, by driving Poliarchus out of Sicily: for he being a brave and active youth, and of solid
K 4 judgment,

judgment, by his spirit supported the king's party; and now either being dead or absent, he might the more easily put his factious schemes into execution. The report of his death indeed did not long pass current; but whether it was only suspected, or betrayed by some that were in the secret of his departure, it was soon after whispered about, that Arsidas in his ship had conveyed him away in safety. And this was the first ground Lycogenes found for complaint against the king: speaking among his own party, and reporting that Meleander was of a most fickle and unkingly mind, and had broken his faith with them; since by his orders or connivance the ambassadors were slain by Poliarclus, and afterwards the offender by his means had escaped punishment, and was now safe in Italy, and ready to be employed again in such or the like mischiefs. Lycogenes at first uttered these reports sparingly, and only among the king's enemies; but his followers more freely endeavoured to throw a stain upon the king;

king; and there were not wanting those, who carried these reports to the monarch, who persevered in the same mildness of behaviour as before, that the same appearance of negligence, which formerly had hurt his own interest, might now deceive his enemies. His mind was indeed confirmed in resolution by the manly fortitude of Argenis, more than by the treachery of Lycogenes, or the danger of the state. When he complained, that she left the sacrifice unfinished, and thereby gave cause of suspicion, that it was a pretence to break the treaty of peace, she replied, "If there was any thing amiss in that event, you ought rather to complain of the gods, whose impulse I could neither resist, nor contain: but, Sire, there are more that wonder, that you should make such a peace, than that the gods and I should disapprove it. Pardon the liberty, which your goodness encourages me to take, when I tell you, it were better to perish bravely, than basely to suffer so many injuries, and submit to reign by courtesy."

The king, struck with her courage and constancy of mind so far above her sex, resolved to put those severities in practice, which he had long meditated. To this purpose, he determined to reside at Eipercté, as a proper place either for defence or retreat, where he had long since, under various pretexts, laid up stores of all things necessary for either fortune.

Eipercté is a mountain in the territory of Panormus, of some few miles in compass; the base of it is fixed upon steep and ragged rocks, but after these rise to a certain height, it affords by degrees an easier ascent, till one comes to the top, where is a large plain, upon which is a little mount, that seems as if by nature designed for a citadel. This castle had been fortified by former kings, and stored with ammunition. The rest of the mountain's top was covered with a pretty town, and many pleasant houses scattered about it. On that side, which looks towards the sea, there was a harbour capable of receiving all kinds of shipping, which
breaks

breaks in between the rocks, and is defended by the mountain from storms of all kinds. The town overlooks the port, so that the inhabitants could prevent any ship from coming in without their permission: on the land side it was only to be ascended by two paths both difficult, and well defended. It was also a great blessing to the inhabitants, that near their houses were rich and fertile grounds for their cattle; and that they might acknowledge the favour of the gods, there was plenty of springs, and a pure wholesome air, in which no venomous creature could live. At the foot of the path that led from the port, stood an image of Ceres crowned with wheat ears: her chariot had a pair of flying serpents yoked to it, which seemed to admonish those who passed that way, not to go forward without saluting the goddess, nor overlook the consecrated stone, where, in antique characters, she seemed to speak to them after this manner.

If wheresoever crooked Nereus flow,
To me all grounds their fruit, all countries owe
K 6 Their

Their peaceful laws: if safe by my command
 All grain and fruits in fields or gardens stand,
 This my deserved praise all nations sound,
 Let me live safe and honour'd on this ground:
 Let no proud foe this coast depopulate;
 This is my seat, my land assign'd by fate.
 This earth let nothing but the ploughshare wound,
 No other arms, nor ruder clangor sound.
 This is my just request: who dares to try,
 Will find in me too strong an enemy;
 I can bring fire and weapons, and to mine,
 Nature, my parent, all her powers shall join.
 Old Saturn's child, by Jove a mother made,
 The seas my brother rules, my son hell's gloomy
 shade.

Meleander used frequently to go thither
 under colour of hunting. His most trusty
 soldiers were there in garrison; and in
 case fortune should be averse, and he
 compelled to fly his country, he had upon
 various pretexts brought many of the
 royal gallies into that harbour: he had
 also, at convenient times, carried into the
 castle the most valuable treasures collected
 by his predecessors; great quantities of
 jewels, and likewise natural curiosities;
 branches of coral, which they had taken
 out of the neighbouring sea; foreign
 purple,

purple, laid by for several ages, which the rich tincture of the Mare stained and preserved as fresh as at the first; besides gold and silver plate in abundance, mostly valuable for the workmanship, and respected for the sake of their antiquity. There was indeed no great store of money in specie, for the treasury was exhausted by the king's liberality, which was however now much lessened by consideration for the future. The king now discovered his purposes to Argenis only, that he was resolved to vindicate the royal dignity. If Lycogenes, and the chiefs of his faction, under various pretences, could be drawn into the castle, they should be brought to a trial for their treasonable practices, convicted and punished. To this end, he had chosen Eipercté as the most convenient place, which both commanded the sea and the country about it. "Perhaps, (said he) this severity may deter others, who now presume upon my clemency to offend with impunity; but if the war shall again break out, and the event be against us, I will

I will quit this ungrateful land, and embarking with thee and the rest of my treasures, I will sail into Africa. There are not wanting there, those that will receive us in our flight, and either my old age or thy youth, undeserving of this calamity, shall appease the cruelty of fortune. If such should be our destiny, I will entrust Eipercté to the care of Eurimedes, who with a select garrison shall defend it to the last extremity. In the mean time, my child, Sicily will suffer for our injuries. Its inhabitants will be torn in pieces among themselves; the common people will at length find their error, will perceive the difference between their governors and us, and all things falling into a state of anarchy and confusion, they will cast their eyes upon us; and expect from us a deliverance. In the mean while I would have thee, my Argenis, retire into the castle, as I am afraid we must soon [stand upon our defence. One thing be especially careful of, that no woman be admitted into thy company, of whose
fidelity

fidelity thou art not well assured : it is enough, my daughter, that we are betrayed by *men*."

Argenis commended the resolution of her father, and persuaded him to try his fortune in war ; adding, that she had hitherto used her best care that no woman of unknown character or disposition should be admitted to her acquaintance or familiarity. After they were separated, she began to reflect seriously, what women they should be, of whom the king warned her to beware, or whether any of her attendants were disliked by him. She soon acquainted Selenissa what were her doubts, not knowing that it was she, who, disliking Timoclea, had by her artifices rendered her suspected by Meleander ; and now the subtle old woman, pleased with the success of her cunning practices, feigned to Argenis, that she wondered who should put these doubts into the king's head. The cause of her jealousy against Timoclea was, that as Argenis was grateful to her for the good offices she had done to Poliarchus,

archus, she feared that lady's merits would endear her to the princess, and so she might be favoured above herself: therefore, being stung with envy, she put in practice such arts as are familiar to courts. She said nothing openly against Timoclea, because her cunning had failed of success, if Argenis had perceived it, and because she knew that she might, under colour of friendship, be more effectually her enemy. To this purpose she always prevented any favours the princess intended towards her, alledging many reasons why she ought to forbear or delay them. On these occasions she would say, "Would you have Timoclea know that she is rewarded for concealing Poliarchus? Are you willing, the engagement between him and you should be known to many people? It will certainly be more discreet to shew her some trifling favours, in such a manner as to appear your own gift, and not the reward of her merits. Above all, let her remain in her own house; her admission into your household could not be managed without suspicion.

suspicion. I am of opinion, that it ought never to be known to the people that she preserved Poliarchus; it would be dangerous on all sides; and what will this stranger Archombrotus think? He knows the obligation that Poliarchus owes to her, and will he not perceive, that your favours are the reward of this service?"

By these and the like arguments, Selenissa took care of her own interest, rather than her lady's, esteeming her friendship lost, if any other shared it with her; but she managed this affair with so much art, that she seemed only to be careful for Argenis. This is the perpetual bane and mischief of royal characters, when such as are in their favour, under colour of advising them, gratify their own envy, and sometimes praise those whom they most hate, that their slanders may be the more readily believed: and thus Selenissa raised suspicions in the king against Timoclea, insinuating, that she formerly favoured Lycogenes, and it was not certainly known how she was affected, though

though she was in favour with the unsuspicious princess. To Argenis, she would mix the praises and merits of the lady with the dangers that her preferment would raise; and because there appeared some truth mixed with her reflections, it so happened, that Timoclea found little advantage from the favour of Argenis, excepting that, when she came as formerly to wait on her, she treated her with more familiarity, and at her departure would sometimes make her a present, as seeking an occasion to display her bounty.

C H A P. II.

Meleander being in great danger, Archombrotus saves his life. On this account Eristhenes kills the king's coachman, which causes suspicion of himself.

ABOUT this time, Argenis by the king's desire, attended by Ibburanes (who was then at court upon business) went to Eipercté: and not long after, Meleander in going thither was in great danger of his life. Whether by the treachery of his own people, or by the decree of destiny, which took occasion to prefer Archombrotus to his favour and affection.

There was a lake about a mile in compass, whose banks were pleasant and safe, but farther on, very deep and dangerous. The king's coachman turned into this lake, as chusing the pleasant way. The frequency of the chariots that daily passed had left many tracks, and left no room to fear; when behold! the king's horses
either

either taking fright, or stung by the gnats of the fens, or else by the treachery of their guide, shaking their manes, and throwing up their heads, ran headlong into the lake. All the company cried out fearfully, but few offered their assistance, either through fear for themselves, or overcome by the surprize at the sudden accident. Among the few that followed the king's chariot, none could keep up with Archombrotus; sometimes calling to the coachman to pull in his horses and turn them about, then to the king to leap into the water, being not yet so deep as a man's height. But in the meanwhile the chariot went on, and now the wheels were covered by the water. Then Archombrotus performed a most manly and daring action; because his horse was hindered by the water, he leapt off his back, and making speed up to the chariot, he pulled the king out of it in so critical a moment, that an instant after, the water driving with great force swallowed up both the chariot and horses. The weight of
the

the king falling upon Archombrotus, almost funk him, and the bottom being slippery with the motion of the waters, which was up to their shoulders, made it still more difficult; they both laboured to get a firm footing, and whilst they were thus striving, those of their friends that were nearest, drew them out of the water.

When Meleander was safely landed, the thought of so great danger escaped, struck him with a horror, which was increased by reflecting, that being unable to swim, he had certainly been lost, if Archombrotus, neglecting his own safety, had not taken the danger upon himself. All were struck with admiration, that he a stranger, not bound to him by law, birth, or benefits, should venture his life for the king, when so many of his subjects and countrymen stood by unconcerned. This service (as it ought) greatly affected the monarch, who embraced him eagerly, and held him blushing at his own praises, some time in his arms. Being before bid to love him for his worth, he was now glad of an occasion

sion to prefer him to his favour, without the envy of others.

In the meantime, the king's coachman having escaped the water, reached the banks, with looks full of terror; when Eristhenes, who had been the loudest in exclaiming against him, drew his sword, and unawares to the rest, thrust him through; he fell back dead into the water, with great applause from the younger part of the company, but this action displeased the wiser sort. If this accident did not happen by the coachman's fault, why should the poor wretch be murdered? If guilty of treason, why not examined, and compelled to discover his accomplices? Did Eristhenes only love the king, that he took upon himself the office of executioner of his revenge? Then they began to suspect that the coachman was hired by Lycogenes, to take away the king's life by this means, and when it failed of effect, lest he should be compelled to discover the conspirators, he was slain by Eristhenes, the intimate friend of Lycogenes. But
the

the power of the faction, and the time being not yet ripe for revenge, obliged Meleander to dissemble his thoughts, which he did so calmly, that not even Erifthenes could perceive himself suspected.

CHAP. III.

The king holds a private council. The advice of Cleobulus. Archombrotus proposes to recall Poliarcbus. The resolution of the king and his friends.

WHEN they arrived at Eipercté, the town was full of noblemen, who came to congratulate the king on his escape, who, on his side, concealed his intention, and affected to appear uncommonly chearful.

Among the chief friends of Lycogenes, were Oloödemus and Eristhenes, who were raised by interest to eminent stations: Eristhenes was made the king's treasurer, though he knew he conferred this place upon an enemy (but so the present times, and the dissimulation he had begun to practise required) and Oloödemus had the government of the country about the promontory of Pachynus. These dividing their intended business between them, were differently

ferently employed : Eristhenes, under colour of his office, was present on the spot, watching the king's actions and designs, while Oloödemus was absent with Lyco-genes, seducing the Sicilians, and laying a foundation for fresh mischiefs : and on these three men, the chief strength and power of the faction rested. The king, though he had taken his resolution, was desirous to know the opinion of Cleobulus ; he also much used the advice of Eurimedes, and Archombrotus was in high favour and esteem with him : he called these three together privately, and (Argenis being with him) he desired their opinions, concealing his own that they might not be biaſſed by it : he shewed in what state the affairs of Sicily now stood ; he observed that this peace was more pernicious than the former war ; that foreseeing this, he had fortified and stored the castle of Eipercté, in which they were : and added, that he knew the weight of the rebellion rested upon the heads of a few men, the chief leaders of it ; now he desired to know, in those circum-

stances, their opinion and advice. None of them cared to speak first, on a business of such importance, till the king, in respect to his years and approved wisdom, commanded Cleobulus to give his opinion.

“ We must (said he) oh king, be in earnest to crush this faction, or expect to be crushed by it. Moderation would now be a vice in you ; you will neither offend the gods, nor blemish your own character, by bringing your enemies to their just punishment ; for Lycogenes himself first broke the peace, and by his chastisement those who hate or despise your goodness, will alter their opinions. Do we not know that the cities have been invited to rebel ? that many are ready to rise, and enlist themselves under the banners of Lycogenes ? What then do we stay for, till there be no sound part left in Sicily ? Are you afraid to anticipate their designs, or do you superstitiously wait, till they command you to unsheath the sword ? You have Eristhenes here ; send for Lycogenes and Oloödemus, as if to consult upon some
business

business of importance; if they come, secure their persons, and let them be brought to trial for their treasons, and when convicted be immediately put to death. If they refuse to come, treat them as rebels, pursue them with an open and active war, and while they are unprepared, put an end to the troubles of Sicily."

To these words of Cleobulus, Eurimedes added, that he would undertake for six thousand foot, and five hundred horse, all tried and faithful men, and ready at his command. These were partly of the guards, partly of the garrison of Eipercté, the rest were distributed about Panormus, and in the castle of Epipolis: and he observed, that a select body of old soldiers, was better than a multitude of such fresh troops, as Lycogenes could raise: and when the royal standard was displayed, there was no doubt, but many would take the better side.

Archombrotus was pleased with these preparations for war, thinking he had now a proper opportunity to venture something for Poliarchus. "I, said he, am but young

and a foreigner, therefore I offer nothing as to the principal affairs in question; but if you resolve upon war, why do you reject your own strength, the assistance of your friends? There is not one of the soldiers, that wishes not for the return of Poliarchus, who was driven away merely by the envy of Lycogenes; he understands the art of war, and even his name is formidable to your enemies. And besides, he is so well beloved by the soldiers, that the sight of him will be to them an omen of success, and will make them more forward and ready to undertake great exploits. I therefore give it as my opinion, that we should seek him out, excuse the necessity of the times that drove him hence, and invite him back to new triumph."

Argenis, with pleasure, heard Archombrotus thus boldly plead for Poliarchus, and was more especially glad, that Meander listened attentively to this advice. And that none might check this fair and hopeful beginning, she added, "Now Arfidas
stands

stands in the same state with Poliarchus, who remains in Italy, as if banished from his own country : of the fidelity of Arsidas, you, sire, have no doubt, and perhaps he has deserved better of us, than of Poliarchus, by this late action."—Argenis being thus earnest in the defence of Arsidas, because his safety was concerned with that of Poliarchus ; the rest, to please her, were ambitious to shew themselves of the same opinion.

Then said the king, " By this unanimity of opinion, I perceive, that the gods take care of our affairs, for what you advise, I had before resolved to do. As for Poliarchus and Arsidas, I had long ago in my own heart absolved them ; it remains to consider by what means we may recall them both."

All present were of opinion, that some trusty messenger should be sent with presents to Poliarchus, to intreat him, that as soon as the war should break out against Lycogenes, he would return to Sicily. Upon this resolution the king broke up

the council ; charging them to keep secret all that they had heard and resolved.

But Argenis, after the manner of lovers, (always immoderately rejoicing or grieving) visibly showed her happiness at this event, so much beyond her hopes ; while the king ignorant of the cause, said, “ Daughter, I embrace this omen of good fortune ! for since the beginning of our misfortunes, this is the first time that I have seen you look so well pleased and happy.”

CHAP. IV.

Archombrotus falls in love with Argenis.

The arts of Lycogenes to seduce the people.

WHEN the evening came on, Archombrotus, after his usual custom, went to walk in the king's garden. There as he passed alone among the rows of trees, he called to mind the night when Poliarchus and himself were guests at Timoclea's house: he recollected the alteration of voice and countenance, which he perceived in Poliarchus when he questioned him concerning Argenis, which he then surmised to proceed from love; but other matters intervening, it went out of his memory, and the rather because he had at first no notion of its being mutual, but only an amorous inclination in Poliarchus common to youth: but now it came into his mind, that Argenis, in defending Arsidas, seemed unusually warm and

L 4

earnest

earnest in her arguments and requests, and certainly, all that Arfidas had done related to the safety of Poliarchus. On weighing these circumstances on both sides, Archombrotus began to suspect, that there was a secret and intimate friendship between them. He considered the beauty and merits of Poliarchus, and whatever might raise so great a hope in him, or wish in Argenis. And in this regard, though his parentage were concealed, yet it might be noble: “For I am not, said he, the only one whose birth and fortunes are not to be estimated by my appearance.”

And while he thus calls to mind the beauties and fortunes of Argenis, he silently celebrates the happiness of Poliarchus. By degrees he admires and praises those charms, which he had hitherto beheld unmoved: he dwells on the graces of Argenis, who was so beautiful and so worthy to be beloved; her birth, her fortunes, her merits, all equally great and noble, and who, even if she had no prerogatives of birth, if choice were to be made out
of

of all the virgins in Sicily, who but Argenis should be called to the throne? Her wisdom, her modesty, her language, superior to all her sex, and her form almost divine. Then he turns his thoughts upon himself; neither did he think his own birth or qualities unequal to such a hope. This thought adds fuel to his newly-kindled fires: he knew not yet that he was in love, but only indulging idle, yet as he deemed not unlikely or unreasonable thoughts; but by degrees his imagination found pleasure in these ideas, not considering that the only way to conquer and be free, is to resist the first impressions of love. And now, the more he loved Argenis, the colder he grew in his friendship to Poliarchus: he first felt the pangs of envy, and next of jealousy, and he that entered the garden free and happy, went out of it sick and pensive, his soul being made a captive. As an addition to his malady, he sought for solitude, and supped alone; and when by himself nothing but love presented

itself to his thoughts, and he gave himself up to those cares that he till then had been a stranger to.

While these things passed at Eipercté, Lycogenes and his party took no small care to put the mischiefs they had plotted into execution, he going about, under various pretences, to different cities, admonishing the magistrates, after feasting them highly, and warned them not to suffer the public liberty to be betrayed, saying, that Sicily was endangered by pernicious counsels; that they should remember they lived indeed under a monarchy, but not a despotic tyranny; nor did he speak any thing against the king, but so secretly, that it might be excused even to Meleander himself. When he perceived his auditors moved at his speeches, he would sigh, and let fall words of uncertain meaning, as if he knew more than he dared to speak. By these means many looked upon him as the pillar of his country, and began to slight and despise the king, especially when, by
Lycogenes's

Lycogenes's means, it was reported among the people, that the natives were neglected, and strangers preferred to the chief offices in the state; that the taxes and customs were daily encreased, and lastly, that destruction hung over their heads from a prince, who was incensed against them ever since the former war. Besides these devices, the priests, corrupted by his bribes, assisted his views: they forged divinations and presages at the sacrifices, whether public or private, and the beholders were terrified with feigned prodigies of different kinds: however, all foretold, that a great change was near at hand, and that for the better; but at present the gods were pleased with nothing in the state. But besides these fictions, there happened prodigies neither false nor feigned, which seemed to foretel the approaching miseries; for in some places it rained stones from heaven, in others two suns appeared together: and these few real signs gave faith to a great many feigned ones: so that men rashly

gave credit to them. A certain poet, not wholly free from this infatuation, thus ventured to describe it.

Ye gods, who made this well-join'd frame of earth,
 Forbear to dire predictions to give birth.
 All things are chang'd, in heaven's affrighted face
 Strange phantoms fly, and envious comets blaze.
 Lost is the winter's cold, the spring's gay pride,
 The Dog-star lays his wonted heat aside.
 So in the world's first infancy, the sun,
 Yet young, his unknown course thro' heav'n to run,
 Unskilful in his charge did oft' times err,
 And thro' the pathless ways confounds the year.
 Behold how black a cloud obscures the sky,
 From Ætna's firey mouth! the sea, swoln high,
 The south wind rolls ashore on Sicily! }
 Such was the fear, when once great Neptune's hand
 Disjoin'd this isle from fair Italia's land.
 Great are the gods portents; but greater far
 Our inward fears of famine, plague, or war.
 All men foretel our woes, all men foresee,
 From gods or men, war, death, and misery.
 To arms! to arms! — The cruel deities
 Appease with more deserving sacrifice!
 Let blood our sacrificing weapons stain,
 Our guilt atone, and life by death obtain.

CHAP. V.

*A discourse concerning the sect of the
Hyperephanians.*

ABOUT this time it was reported to the king, that Lycogenes held a secret correspondence with the Hyperephanii, and some were afraid that in order to make use of their power, he would abjure the religion of his country. By chance, when these things were spoken of, Archombrotus and Ibburanes were walking in the king's gallery, and hearing mention of the Hyperephanii, the former asked, what difference there was between them and the other inhabitants of Sicily; why their names, designs, and forces were mentioned separately. Ibburanes, desirous to give him a full information, paused a little to recollect himself, and then thus began: "We have given to those men the name of Hyperephanii from the nature of their superstitions. Their sect, which is troublesome to princes, begun in our days, having
one

one Ufinulca for its author, who, despising the religion that hath ever been professed in Sicily, presumed to bring in a new one, and trouble the consciences of such as either too great a share of pride, or too much simplicity rendered fit to be preyed upon, some being ambitious of following such a teacher, others deceived by his eloquence and shew of piety. To all this may be added, the force of novelty, which so blinded their minds, that the barbarous assertions of Ufinulca found admirers and followers, not only from the furthest parts of the world, but even of the foster children of Sicily, although nothing can be more monstrous than his tenets. I am indeed ashamed to relate his madness and folly, which reflect upon the wisdom and goodness of the gods. He denies that any man commits a sin, but he whom the gods compel, and have predestined to it: that howsoever you strive against vice, be innocent in your life, upright towards men, and religious to the gods, he affirms, this is not the virtue that renders men acceptable

acceptable to heaven, but only the signs of that virtue. Further, that there is no difference in sins, but only in the persons that commit them; that those who are hated by the gods, for only stealing a few pot-herbs, deserve the severest punishments that can be inflicted, whilst others again cannot forfeit the favour of heaven by the most atrocious crimes; so that from the same mirey slough of sin some shall come out clean, while others are polluted and filthy. I forbear to speak of other frenzies of Ufinulca, nor would these opinions have found followers, had they not happened in the infancy of our kings, in which the turbulent humours of men cannot properly be restrained nor expelled. This disease was encreased by the eagerness of faction, and some of the nobility, disaffected to the government, made themselves leaders of the hyperephanii. Then, in a most fatal manner, was Sicily plagued with civil wars, and as many as chose the licence of rebellion revolted to this sect, displaying their colours.

colours in the field against our kings themselves. Nothing then escaped their fury; they trampled on the altars of the gods, overturned their temples, fired houses, and consecrated their new doctrines to the furies by the blood of their countrymen. After so many years, you may yet see the marks of their desolation. In these disturbances, they separated themselves from the rest of the Sicilians, and seemed as it were another country and people, neither upon the strongest league would they unite sincerely with the rest of the nation: so being swayed by a restless and unquiet spirit, they always either threaten war or fear it.

“ In minds thus affected, what weight have the king’s commands! They have possessed themselves not only of soldiers but cities, and almost whole provinces, from whence they consult and determine how far to assist the king, or refuse him their aid; and if they give assistance in war, or succour upon any other occasion, they brag of their fidelity as being worthy
of

of thanks; but they give and refuse their aids more like equals than subjects. Thus do they carry themselves as just arbiters both of the kings and of the gods, proportioning what they owe to both, not by the laws and customs of their country, but by their own humours and opinions. You may easily imagine, how this contagion threatens Sicily; for as that sort of hatred is most irreconcilable, which arises out of different opinions in matters of religion, we may justly fear, that these hyperephanii will seek to effect, by the ruin of their country, what they cannot compass by their own strength, and calling in foreign nations to their aid, invite them, as it were, to the possession of Sicily. But if it should please the gods to avert from us these miseries, yet how great are those which we now see and feel! If children are offended with their parents, or the nobles with their king, immediately, under pretence of religion, they throw themselves into the arms of this sect. What shall I say of the vestal virgins!

virgins ! what of the priests ! When they grow weary of their chastity, they renounce their religion, and hired with the rewards of forbidden marriages, they betake themselves to the hyperephanii to shelter them in their iniquities. By these examples, and the licentiousness in disputing and living, the common people are made to waver in their faith, and to doubt what gods there are, and how they should be worshipped, till by degrees they come to believe nothing sacred or certain in religious matters. By this impiety, religion suffers, whilst it breaks also into the peace of the state, and wastes the strength of our disordered Sicily, which will never recover her former health and vigour, till the hyperephanii are restored to reason, and the wound skinned over."

" But (said Archombrotus) why do the Sicilians delay to cure this evil ? Why do they not by force of arms cut off the infected part to preserve the whole body ? I that am a stranger offer my hand and sword in this business ; neither do I think
I can

I can offer a more acceptable sacrifice, than that of shedding their blood, to the gods, or of losing mine in the attempt. You, Ibburanes, should speak of this to the king, and urge him with all your eloquence to this war."

Ibburanes, smiling at this discourse, said, "I commend your zeal animated by youthful courage; and formerly many were of your opinion, till by the event it has appeared, that, as some animals are nourished by poison, so this sect grows stronger by persecution, and is fattened by war and desolation. There are many now who incline to the doctrines of Ufinulca, who, if they were threatened or compelled entirely to abjure them, would more strongly support them under oppression; and as you may easily break a single thread, but if you twist a number in one band, the harder you strain them, the more strongly they hold together, and at last become as a cord too strong to be broken; so those who are most indifferent on that side, and who by forbearance
might

might be won back again, when they see the sword drawn against them to oblige them to a forced, and as they think a shameful recantation, most furiously unite with that party, and tying themselves together by a knot of conspiracy, grow to the strength of a nation, and cannot be overcome. And beside, this sect doth not, like the best and primitive ones, seek to grow great by obeying and suffering, but are easily drawn into rebellion, and maintain their mischiefs by shedding blood. Sicily is full of youths, whom sometimes levity, poverty, and the love of arms, instigate to atchieve some exploit, and they, not regarding right or honour, will join with the faction, and will bear arms, though it were against the gods, and the happiness of all human kind. In like manner, when there is a war, in hope of spoil and plunder, they will join themselves to the hyperephanii, who in peace would renounce them; and the king, by making war against them, creates more new delinquents than he can cut off old ones."

"Must

“Must then this bane of the kingdom (said Archombrotus) be suffered? While the venom spreads, must you stand looking on till all the infected members are destroyed? Surely no physic, how dangerous soever, could do more harm than this deadly delay.” “There are (said Ib-
 buranes) other more certain means, by which Sicily may wash away this stain. But this care depends upon the king; and we hope that Meleander’s piety and care will abate the violence of this disease, when once the civil wars are ended, which have always strengthened the Hyperephanii: they are only to be subdued by peace, ease, and a happy government, when they can get nothing by disturbances to bestow upon their seditious assistants. In the time of peace, the heads of them pay respect to the king, upon whose favour all things depend: and if he treats their doctrines not with hatred but contempt, he may by that method, more effectually than by war, bring the nobles to a different way of thinking; and if they are ashamed
 to

to abjure their sect, they will at least otherwise provide for their children, and bring them up under such masters as shall instruct them in the old religion, and so open the way to their favour and preferment at court. Those who prefer their prejudices to reason and the custom of their ancestors, will be overcome by this way, being excluded from honours and the hopes of preferment; and this must not be done by edicts, which excite murmurings, but by the discretion of the prince, not allowing them any share in the public offices, nor suffering them to stray beyond the limits of the laws. In all other things, let him be gentle to them, and by his kind and familiar treatment, shew himself such a one as is most worthy to be obeyed; for many of them, Archombrotus, do not err of themselves, but by the fault of their education, and therefore by care may be reclaimed.

“ By these slow remedies the sinews and strength of the Hyperephanii will be cut in pieces, and themselves reconciled to
their

their country. But these designs are only fit for a time of peace, which I pray the gods to restore to Sicily, and not suffer Lycogenes's faction to be strengthened by these sectaries; for I think he will not embrace their religion, which would make him odious to all the rest of Sicily."

When Ibburanes had thus spoken, he invited Archombrotus to supper, and, in the way of friendship, advised him to treat the Hyperephanii kindly; for as the times were, they were more likely to be reclaimed by affability and example, than by a professed hatred and dislike.

C H A P. VI.

*The plot of Eristhenes against the king.
Archombrotus is much disturbed in mind.
A present to Poliarchus.*

AND now all things being ripe on Lycogenes's side, a day was appointed for the execution of their design; it was in the midst of spring, on the tenth of the month called Thargelion. Eristhenes had a house not far from Eipercté, with a forest full of all kinds of game. Thither, on the day appointed, he undertook to invite Meleander and Argenis to a feast. If the plot succeeded, he was to secure them both; if Meleander resisted, or called for assistance, they resolved to kill him, thinking it sufficient to have Argenis in their power; but if Meleander, either through sickness or mistrust, should that day keep in Eipercté, then Lycogenes, with an army, should suddenly assault him there. It was appointed

pointed for him to be at Syracuse on that day, and thither all his faction were to come, to choose him general of the commonwealth against the king. Oloödemus also was to come thither, with the troops he had raised, to support their designs. And they believed also, that most of the cities would revolt from the king; some by the example of the former war, and others by the falsehood of the governors and magistrates, many of whom they had corrupted, and others that were inclined to rebel.

Thus both sides had resolved upon their measures. Meleander designed to surprise Lycogenes, and he to ensnare the king: but Argenis was oppressed with a double portion of care, for the state and Poliarchus; she therefore urged the execution of those resolutions, which the king and his friends had agreed on in council. A present was to be prepared for Poliarchus; Arsidas was to be recalled home. A faithful and discreet person was wanted to manage these affairs. No man but

Archombrotus suspected these secret cares of the lady; but her concern could not escape his observation, now wholly given up to the tyranny of love, and grudging every mark of regard she bestowed on Poliarchus. Often he accused himself for being the first adviser of the return of Poliarchus, and sometimes he thought of persuading the king to the contrary; but the shame of contradicting himself, and fear of displeasing Argenis, restrained him from so rash a resolution. It happened that he went to the king whilst he was in conference with his daughter about the return of Arsidas; and now he was indeed esteemed by Argenis, for the sake of Poliarchus, whom he had so warmly recommended to the king. She therefore looked pleasantly upon him, and saluted him more familiarly than usual; while he was so struck with her behaviour, being ignorant of the cause, that, overcome with joy, he retired as soon as possible to his own lodging to recollect himself, and to recover his spirits; where when he had shut

shut himself up, his mind wavering between hope and fear, at length he broke out into the following soliloquy.

“ Am I then so happy? Hath my first sacrifice to Cupid made him favourable to me? I saw her countenance, I observed her eyes, both expressed a lively joy at my coming. But ah! unhappy lover, foolishly to indulge such hopes! The gods grant not such blessings so easily. Common marriages are not disturbed by troubles or accidents; but lovers of high birth and fortunes are ever cross’d, that even the labour might enhance the reward. Oh! may I be deceived in my fears, and may not that salutation and sweet countenance of Argenis, which so raises my hopes, forbode my ruin! Had not these signs of favour relation to Poliarchus? Or were they not in token of gratitude to me, for speaking well of him before the king? What! did she by these, request me to become again his advocate and protector? Love is not worth such a sacrifice; no, not the love of Argenis! I will not

owe the favour of Argenis to Poliarchus, nor shall she be indebted to me for him. Shall I be the means of another man's happiness, and labour to undo myself? Shall I be esteemed for doing mean and servile offices, in order to dispose of Argenis to another? I cannot bear the thought! Yet art thou deceived, Archombrotus, if thou thinkest to compel her to love thee! Love is gained by intreaty, patience, and observance. Yet, do I mean to command Argenis or to serve her? Shall I say to her, I forbid thee to love Poliarchus! How daring and insolent would this be! If she deserves to be beloved, she will love the most deserving; I must then contend with Poliarchus in virtue, in glory, and in fame. It is, therefore, better for him to be present. I will seek out the cause why he is beloved, and by the same qualities aim to please her. Whatever he doth to gain her I will strive to exceed him, and if I cannot succeed, I will, at last, dispute it with my sword; it will be easy to find an occasion of quarrel with him, and let him

him be never so valiant, love, still more powerful, shall strengthen my hand to conquer him. In the mean time, while we treat of his return, it will be easy for me to obtain the company and conversation of Argenis. She will accustom herself to hear me, and to believe me, and when esteem is strengthened by time, it often serves to other purposes than those for which it began."

When Archombrotus had thus ended the contention in his mind, he returned to the presence of Meleander, where he found a fresh occasion of vexation and resentment; for Cleobulus had persuaded the king, that the present to Poliarchus should be sent in the name of Argenis. "She, said he, is guiltless of his being driven out of Sicily, and next to yourself the care of the kingdom belongs to her: besides, he will understand that your request is included in hers; and though he were obstinate to us, yet he will not, surely, refuse a lady's favour." Meleander warmly approved his opinion. "It only remains, replied he,

to chuse a present, and a proper messenger to carry it." Timonides was a valiant young man, and a faithful friend of Poliarclus: Argenis first named him, and the king immediately appointed him for this secret embassy. After they had resolved upon this measure, they next considered what present to send. A Syrian merchant had brought thither many curiosities from India and Arabia, the unprofitable commodities of a vain and luxurious people. Among other things was a bracelet of woven silk, covered over with precious stones of various kinds and colours; placed in such a manner, as to represent either the fighting or the chase of certain wild beasts, whom the hunters in one place followed with their spears, in another received with their javelins. These gems were of high estimation, as well as the workmanship, and valued at fifty talents. All that saw it, admired and celebrated its beauty.

CHAP. VII.

Lycogenes causes the bracelet, sent to Poliarchus, to be poisoned. The means he used to discover the king's designs. He writes a letter to Poliarchus.

THIS bracelet, Argenis and Cleobulus, with the king's approbation, thought a proper present to send to Poliarchus, and the rather, because it was portable without any danger of discovery; for this affair was to be managed with care and privacy. As this kind of ornament in those times, was worn by men as well as women, therefore it was most proper to be sent from a woman to a man. The king before this set no great value upon it, his mind being otherwise employed; but it was left in the hands of Eristhenes, who, as treasurer, was ordered to shew it to the jewellers to be examined, whether it was worth the king's purchase. Now, lest any should wonder at his buying it suddenly,

the king called for the dice, and losing to Argenis, as they had before agreed, he sent for Eristhenes, and commanded him to buy it directly for the princess, as cheap as he could. Eristhenes, either by his own diligence, or the king's ill fortune, suspected that an embassy to Poliarchus was intended. It was thought afterwards, that this suspicion took its first rise from his wife, who visiting Selenissa, used to throw out words concerning Artidas, to discover their intentions towards him and Poliarchus: being an artful woman, taught by her husband how to gain intelligence for his party.

The king's commanding Eristhenes to buy the bracelet, at a time when his coffers were almost empty, increased his suspicions, insomuch that he wrote to Lycogenes, that he had reason to think, this present was designed to purchase the friendship and assistance of Poliarchus. On which, he that was always ready for mischief, wrote back to this effect: that, as Eristhenes had the bracelet in his custody, he

he would have him poison it: if Poliarclus should receive it, he would doubtless wear it on his arm, and when it grew warm, the poison would operate, and pierce by degrees to the vital parts: but if the king should give it to Argenis, it might be discovered time enough to prevent mischief, for the poison would not operate immediately, and they might contrive to give warning of the mischief, and gain an opinion of exceeding fidelity, by laying all the blame upon the merchant that sold it.

The poison, intended for this purpose, was kept at Eristhenes's house, where they had prepared it to take off several of their enemies. The Ephyrians, a people skilled in mixing poisons of various kinds, when they brought thither a colony and built Syracuse, had long since taught the Sicilians this villanous art. Meleander himself had been attempted by this way, though by the care and fidelity of his servants, carefully examining his clothes and his diet, he had hitherto escaped. Eristhenes

trusted none with this secret, but he himself dipped the inside of the bracelet into the poison, which being of soft woven silk, to wear next the arm : and when he thought it had imbibed the venom, he carried it in a box to the king, who ignorant of so great a villany, commanded all, but Argenis, to leave him ; and then sent privately for Timonides, and charged him faithfully to execute the trust he was thought worthy of. He then explained the whole business to him, and gave him a letter to Arsidas, written with his own hand, to this effect.

“ Arsidas, I have sent Timonides, the bearer of this, to you, and I would have you credit what he shall say in my name, in the same manner as if you heard me speaking to you. Whatever he shall say or do I will ratify : and know withal, that the sooner you return with my guest, you shall be more welcome. Farewell.”

Then Argenis, as it had been agreed, took the box with the bracelet out of her lap : “ Give this, said she, to Poliarchus
from

from me, with this letter; this other letter to Arsidas." Then she gave him the letters, but not those she had shown to Meleander, for they were cold and formal, unsuitable to the affection between her and Poliarchus; in the sealing, she easily changed them for others, more expressive of both love and friendship. Timonides, to conceal the design of his voyage, gave out, that he had obtained leave of the king to travel into Italy and Africa, and it happened luckily, that he had often expressed a desire of travelling among his familiar friends.

But Eristhenes, ever vigilant in treacherous designs, had discovered some things and suspected all the rest; therefore conjecturing that Timonides was sent to Poliarchus, he used a subtle invention to find out the truth. Among his dependants, was a young man so lately come out of the country, that his face was unknown at court. He ordered this youth to mount his horse, and to ride at full speed after Timonides, and when he had overtaken

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him,

him, to say, that he came from the king to warn him, that there were some who suspected the affair of the bracelet, but that he should on no account discover the secret to any man in Sicily, and therefore to be on his guard. "While you speak, said he, observe his countenance; if he understands and answers you, that he will do as you require, leave him as having performed your charge. But if he seem ignorant of your meaning, ask his name, and when he tells you it is Timonides, desire him to pardon your mistaking him for another, and then leave him as soon as possible; if he offers to detain you and seem inquisitive, you may say you are a kinsman of Selenissa's, lately come to court, and for your name, take the first you think of."

The youth diligently obeyed his directions, failing neither in cunning nor success; for Timonides hearing of the bracelet, which he knew to be so great a secret, never suspected the man, but bade him return, and acquaint the king that all was safe,

safe, and that his former orders were sufficient to make him guard the secret with all possible care and discretion.

Timonides being thus deceived, and the king's secret betrayed, Eristhenes writes word to Lycogenes, that if he would surprise Timonides, or take any other course, he must not lose time. Lycogenes was yet unresolved upon his next measures; but finding the king no longer slothful and dilatory, but plotting against him, he began to show more resentment than contempt for him. At length a new design came into his head, to turn the infamy of poisoning upon the king. To this end (a thing that none could have dreamed of) he resolves to solicit the friendship and assistance of Poliarchus himself. And accordingly writes to him after this manner:

“Lycogenes, to Poliarchus—Health. How much you have been deceived in the choice of your friends and enemies, this day shall discover. Pursuing me as your enemy, you have valued Meleander's friendship much more than it deserved.

But

But what is past I shall forget, nor accuse you any further, than to excuse myself. I would rather, you should know by my actions than words, which of us two did wrong, in hating the other. Meleander knowing your wrongs, and fearing your revenge, hath betaken himself to unworthy practices, and of a king is become a prisoner; as a proof of his penitence, and satisfaction for your injuries, he sends you a bracelet dipped in deadly venom! I desire not to have credit with you, but upon full proof; if you will bind this bracelet upon the skin of any creature, if it die not in a little time, I am unworthy to live: if you be wise, you will compell the bearer of this fatal gift, Timonides, to wear it, and with it the death he offers you. From henceforward, you may thank me in what manner you shall chuse. If you continue my enemy, I shall not want means to revenge it openly; my arms, counsels, and forces are ready. But if Meleander's treachery shall give you a better mind, join your forces with mine to revenge this injury. I promise

mise, that whilst I live, you shall not want a brother, or rather, as my years will allow me to say, a father. Farewel."

This audacious letter he gave in charge to a servant of approved trust, with orders that he should so dispose his journey, that he might be with Poliarchus about eight days after Timonides was arrived. This was easy to manage; for both at Messina and Rhegium he might enquire the time of Timonides's coming thither. His mischievous intention in this was, that in eight days time Poliarchus might wear the bracelet, and be poisoned by it. Thus, if the letter should come after his death, it would throw the aspersions upon Meleander; but if Poliarchus should delay to wear it, he would esteem himself highly obliged to Lycogenes, and be greatly incensed against Meleander, whom this discovery would render odious. Besides, he was the bolder to speak reproachfully of the king, because this letter would not reach the hands of Poliarchus before the time appointed for the revolt of the conspirators.

C H A P. VIII.

Lycogenes excuses his absenting himself from court. The advice and diligence of Cleobulus. Oloödemus and Eristhenes arrested.

MELEANDER, after he had sent away Timonides, was wholly intent upon enticing Lycogenes and Oloödemus to court. To this purpose, he sent letters of invitation to them both. Lycogenes's schemes being not yet ripe for execution, he determined to obey the summons, and attend the king for a few days; but Oloödemus, after receiving the king's letter, would not go to court till he had seen Lycogenes. When they consulted together, it seemed to them very suspicious, that the king should send for them both; for if he had any designs against them, he might more safely execute them upon both together, than on either separately: the safest way, therefore, appeared to be, for Lycogenes to excuse his absence by feigning sickness, and for
Oloödemus

Oloödemus to go to court, and found the king's intentions: so he left Lycogenes, and coming to Eipercté, he saluted the king, and was admitted to sup with him. He then delivered Lycogenes's letter and excuses. Though the king doubted not, but his sickness was a pretence, yet with the same dissimulation they used towards him, he asked many questions concerning his disorder.

After supper, the king sent for Cleobulus, Eurimides and Archombrotus, and asked their advice, what was to be done with Lycogenes, who despised his orders, and with Oloödemus and Eristhenes, who had the boldness to be there, knowing their own guilt. Archombrotus and Eurimides were of opinion, that nothing should be attempted against them, till they had by some stratagem tried once again to entice Lycogenes to court. "But surely, said Cleobulus, we ought not to suffer the prey we have in hold to escape us. Do you think that Lycogenes, unless he were conscious of treason, would with a false pretence

pretence of sickness have put an affront upon the king? May the gods order all things for the best! My advice is, that the king send another summons to Lycogenes; if he refuse to come, I would without scruple treat him as a rebel. In the mean time, I would set a guard of trusty men to watch over Oloödemus and Eristhenes; but with such caution, that they shall not perceive themselves to be prisoners; but when we are certain that Lycogenes will not come, let them be proceeded against according to the law. By their punishment Lycogenes will lose two of his strongest supports, on account of their wealth and followers; and besides, the example will have a strong effect upon the minds of others, who will respect their prince, and remember his power to punish."

This advice of Cleobulus was approved by all the rest, and the next day the king wrote to Lycogenes to come, mingling authority with intreaties; but he, growing still more suspicious, not only refused to obey,

obey, but sent a private message to Oloödemus and Eristhenes, advising them directly to leave the court, for that the king's favour was both deceitful and dangerous: beside, it was become necessary to shew themselves, as the time appointed for the war to break out was near at hand. Neither of them slighted the notice of Lycogenes, but they could not elude the vigilance of Cleobulus, as he had corrupted two of Eristhenes's servants, who gave him information of all their master's actions. From them he had notice, that horses were to be in readiness below Eipercté for Eristhenes to escape in the night.

The king was exceeding glad to have their flight charged against them in proof of their other crimes: he therefore gave Archombrotus commission to take them in the fact, and bring them back by force; and he, pleased with the charge, took especial care to have all things in readiness, by the advice and direction of Eurimides. It was certain they would have but few attendants, lest the noise should discover their
their

their flight. Archombrotus, therefore, took only ten foldiers with him, and they Spaniards, lest by intercourse of language, or infection of the faction, they might favour the escape of the leaders they were to secure. These slipped out of the castle severally without suspicion, as Archombrotus directed them, and he followed them soon after: and all took their station in a ruined house near the road, by which the others must of necessity pass from Eipercté. Archombrotus had not stood long at this post, when by the light of the moon he saw Oloödemus and Eristhenes coming full speed, attended only by three servants; on which he met them with his file of foldiers, and thus accosted them. “Whither now, Oloödemus? whither go you, Eristhenes? By the immortal Jupiter, this looks like the practice of guilty men! Why do you thus run away by night? Why without acquainting the king do you leave the court?” They were so much surpris’d, they could not answer. He therefore arrested.

rested them, and brought them back, trembling with apprehension of this sudden mischief. He then delivered them into the hands of the officers called Triumviri, who were to keep them in prison as traytors. The city was full of trouble upon this occasion, and the next morning it was told to Ibburanes and Dunalbius, who then by chance were gone to the temple of Apollo, not far from Panormus, to visit Antenor the chief priest, who was a man of an exemplary life, and most pleasing conversation. Hearing the report, they came with all speed back to the king, who embracing them, informed them of the whole business. "So may the gods preserve me (said he) as I will make examples of these two men. They shall not again despise and insult my clemency, neither shall the insolence of those, who insult me with saucy libels, frighten me with their menaces. See here what a scroll one of my servants found this morning at my chamber door. Dunalbius took the paper, and while the king spoke to others present,

present, he and Ibburanes read the following verses, which excited their anger and resentment.

Restore these men ! why, tyrant, dost thou threat
With feeble fraud, whom war could not defeat ?
These valiant chiefs, the pride of Sicily,
In a dark squallid dungeon must not die.
Restore them, or no reverence shall withstand
Of thy crown'd head, or scepter-bearing hand,
Or short Sydonian cloak ; the vengeful steel,
That from this injur'd land thou soon shalt feel !
The earth, the hills, conspire against thy head,
To crush thee living, or entomb thee dead.
That even now thy palace does not blaze,
Know thy preservers, and our slackness praise.
We spare our countrymen, and dare thy hate,
When they expire, thou diest : they are thy fate.
Consult thy safety yet ; the fatal brand
Not surer Meleager's life contain'd.
At least these pledges of thy life preserve ;
Or, if the gods permit thee to observe
Wise counsel, yet at our request release
Our gallant friends, and purchase so thy peace.

C H A P. IX.

Timonides's voyage. Poliarchus's shipwreck.

*The grief of Arfidas and Timonides: their
return to Sicily.*

WHILE the court was engaged by these disturbances, Timonides met with many crosses in his journey. After he took leave of the king, he spent three days against his will at his own house in the country, in sacrificing for the good success of his enterprize, and waiting for favourable presages, which could not be obtained before. From thence he went to Arfidas's wife at Messina: when he arrived there, a violent storm raged at sea; so that for four days together, no ship could put out of the harbour. The vessels which lay there received much damage, and were obliged to be repaired before they could sail from that port. Timonides, at length, caused one that had received the least hurt, to be put in order with
all

all speed; and before the sea was sufficiently calmed, he set sail, suffering no other passengers to go in her but himself and his servants. When they had sailed about half way, they were struck with an ill omen to mariners, the spectacle of a late shipwreck. There was a ship, not overturned, but overwhelmed; for, by reason of a leak, it sunk downright. The top of the main-mast was yet above water, and dreadful to see! A wretched mariner clung about it, with a pale and death-like countenance, but parched with the wind. He made signs with his head and hand, for his voice was drowned by the roaring of the sea, and drew their attention and pity for him. Some of the sailors went into the boat, and as he cast himself from the mast, they took him in almost stiff with cold, and brought him on board to Timonides. But then his nerves relaxing, which extreme fear had before braced, he fell down on the deck of the ship, and lay there as half dead. At length, reviving by the scent and taste of the wine they

they brought, he recovered by degrees, and as soon as his strength permitted, he made the following relation.

“ My country is Rhegium, by profession I am a pilot. I was now bound for France, whither I was hired to carry a most noble gentleman. I saw the sea tempestuous and unsafe, for the clouds were driven about with uncertain direction, and was unwilling to sail. But after being often commanded, I weighed anchor and set out, but the winds continually shifting, put us out of our course, till at length, all at once, as scorning our ship, they forsook her, and there was a dead calm. I became now more fearful, and called upon my men to make the first land, knowing this calm would be followed by a tempest. Accordingly we bent our course towards Sicily; but he that hired the ship, forbade us to land in Sicily, and drawing his sword he threatened to cut off the hand that should first pull an oar that way. The day was spent in debating whither to go, and the moon arose with fiery horns, fore-

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telling the storm, which came on so suddenly, that from the beginning my best skill was of no service; we were tossed up and down, and doubtful what the winds would do with us. We passed the night in this danger, and the morning threatened us with still worse, for on a sudden the ship struck upon the flats; the sea's violence raised up the sand like a mount, and the prow stuck fast. Now the planks were loosened, and we with oars and poles got up to the stern; when the gentleman who hired the ship, with his servant and two sailors, got into the boat, and cutting the rope, yielded themselves to certain destruction. They were by the storm presently driven out of our sight; the waves were high and strong, and the poor little boat could not long hold out; neither had we leisure to grieve for the misfortunes of others, being ready ourselves to perish, for the weather-beaten ship could no longer resist the waves, which now entered at every place. Oh! ye Gods, what a scene was there! How dreadful was the cry of

the drowning men, when the sea entirely covered the ship ! I climbed up to the top of the mast, wretched as I was ! though I climbed only as it were to delay my death, till the sunken ship should fall upon her side, and the mast with it. But the gods favoured me above my hopes ; the vessel supported by the sand, stood so upright that the mast preserved me ; it is now two days, that I have with a sad embrace held that mast in my arms, half dead between cold and despair ; for food or sleep I have not once thought on ; and, when the favour of the gods presented your help to me, I was ready to let go my hold, and fall into the sea."

All the ship's company listened to him with tears, but a deep fear struck Timonides, lest this calamity should have happened to Poliarchus ; the passenger came from Italy, he avoided Sicily, both these circumstances made it very likely to be his friend. Full of perplexity, he interrupted the seaman, who was lamenting for his fellows, and relating how they laboured

to climb up the rocks, and how the cruel waves bore them back again to sea :
 “ And who (said he) was this gentleman whom you were to carry ? Was he a citizen of Rhegium or a stranger ? ” The man answered, he knew nothing more, than that Arsidas, a Sicilian, who had an estate at Rhegium, hired the ship, and accompanied his friend to the harbour. Timonides was now struck cold at heart ; he covered his face, and went down into the cabbin, that he might mourn in private, commanding the sailors to make all possible speed. They soon arrived at Rhegium, and he desired the unfortunate pilot to conduct him to Arsidas. It was noon, and Arsidas was laid on a couch reposing himself, ignorant of his approaching sorrow. When informed of his friend’s coming, he leapt up and came to embrace him, receiving him joyfully and hospitably. But Timonides saluted him with a sigh, saying, “ Oh ! my Arsidas ! what is become of Poliarchus ? Unhappy wretches that we are ! Or do I know more than yourself ? ”
 Thus

Thus saying, he shows him the pilot, whom, when Arfidas saw, he suddenly apprehended the danger, and grew paler than Timonides. "Hast thou safely landed the charge delivered to thee any where, demanded he of the pilot, for I know that you could not reach France in so short a time?" The man answered, "You see in me the only survivor of the shipwreck; my vessel, fellows, and passengers, are all cast away in the late furious and merciless storm."

Arfidas upon hearing this was utterly confounded with grief; he sighed deeply, and brought his mournful guests into his house; nor could he (almost lifeless as he was) ask them any questions concerning the manner of the shipwreck. Being in private with Timonides, he did nothing but lament the hard fate and mournful death of Poliarchus, of whom he exclaimed, that the world was unworthy, and used all such exclamations as are common in a fresh and raging grief. When after many tears, Timonides asked, whither Poliarchus

chus was bound, and what moved him to that fatal resolution of going by sea, Arfidas answered, " Rhegium was thought unsafe for him, on account of its neighbourhood to Sicily: he therefore determined to go to France, which I believe is his native country, and from thence to return very soon to us; but by the envy of the fates it has happened, that the world should no longer boast of a man so nearly reaching the virtues and perfections of the immortal gods." Then Timonides, with many sighs, related how Meleander stood affected to Poliarchus, and withal shewed him the bracelet, the now useless gift of Argenis; but his grief would not allow him to admire the riches or workmanship of it.

Having spent the night in sorrow, they both resolved to return home, lest Meleander should in vain expect assistance from Poliarchus, or they be absent at a time, when the king had need of them; for they expected that by this time all Sicily was up in arms. They therefore directed
their

their course, so that they might land at the port of Eipercté. As the winds were variable, as is common in spring, it was seven days before they came in sight of Eipercté; but the nearer they approached the shore, the more were they afflicted: they wished the land they laboured to gain were further removed; for with what countenance could they be the messengers of such evil tidings, as must make them ever after be looked upon as birds of ill omen. But chiefly Arsidas was affected with an additional sorrow to what Timonides knew of; neither did the thought of Meleander move him equal to that of Argenis. Could he behold her dying with grief! and what was more cruel than to be the messenger of death to her? Would she not upbraid him that suffered Poliarclus to go to sea in such a season, whom Timoclea had kept safely in the midst of his enemies! He stood in fear of the princess's displeasure, as being to receive his sentence from her eyes, whether he ought to live or die. Neither was
it

it possible to conceal this unhappy event from her; for whatever Meleander knew must needs come to the ears of Argenis; or if he should be silent to both, what could Timonides do, whose grief would not suffer him to disguise any thing! and beside, the servants would not fail to relate the tragic story to all that would hear it.

In the midst of these sad meditations, the ship arrived in the port of Eipercté, and set them on the shore of Sicily. Here they first commanded their servants and followers not to speak a word of what they had heard, till after they had waited on the king; and going up the hill, the way that led to the town, they came within view of the castle, when (oh the wonderful mixture of good and ill fortune!) the first man they saw was Gelanorus walking between two Sicilians, with an easy and chearful countenance. Arsidas first espied him, and pulled Timonides by the cloak, to make him look that way. He stood awhile with his hands
extended,

extended, gasping for breath, and unable to speak ; but recovering his voice, “ Are we deluded with phantoms, or confounded with strange appearances ? (said he.) Is not that Gelanorus, whom we certainly knew to be shipwrecked with his lord ? ” Timonides was amazed, and without answering Arsidas, he ran to Gelanorus, who seeing his friends, made haste to meet them, while they, on their part, stood silent with astonishment, and did nothing but gaze upon him. At length Arsidas exclaimed with a deep sigh, “ Do I see thee safe, Gelanorus ? Or art thou only a ghost, come hither to warn us to perform thine and thy master’s obsequies ? ” Gelanorus bad them lay aside their fears, for that Poliarchus lived, being marvelously saved from the storm, and since that from pirates ; that he was sent from him to the king, and but the day before arrived at Eipercté. They then began eagerly to question him concerning the whole story ; but Meleander prevented his relation, who seeing them from a window, commanded them

them to be called to him, being troubled with doubts, arising from another prodigy, which he hoped by their means might be explained to him.

The END of the FIRST VOLUME.

ERRATA.

Page 24, for *Ibburemes* and *Dimalbius*, read *Ibburanes* and *Dunalbius*.

32, l. 4, for *on* read *or*. Line 5, *idem*.

73, l. 24, for *on* read *in*.

75, l. 8, after *and* add *be*. Line 18, before *permit* put *not*.

78, l. 22, for *Dæctalus* read *Dædalus*.

79, In the verses, l. 14, for *let* read *lest*.

164, l. 6, for *Aquili* read *Aquilii*.

167, for *further*, and *suppose*, read *and further suppose*.

179, In the verses, l. 23, for *Argo's* read *Argos'*.

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